

**WESLEYAN
CATECHISMS.**

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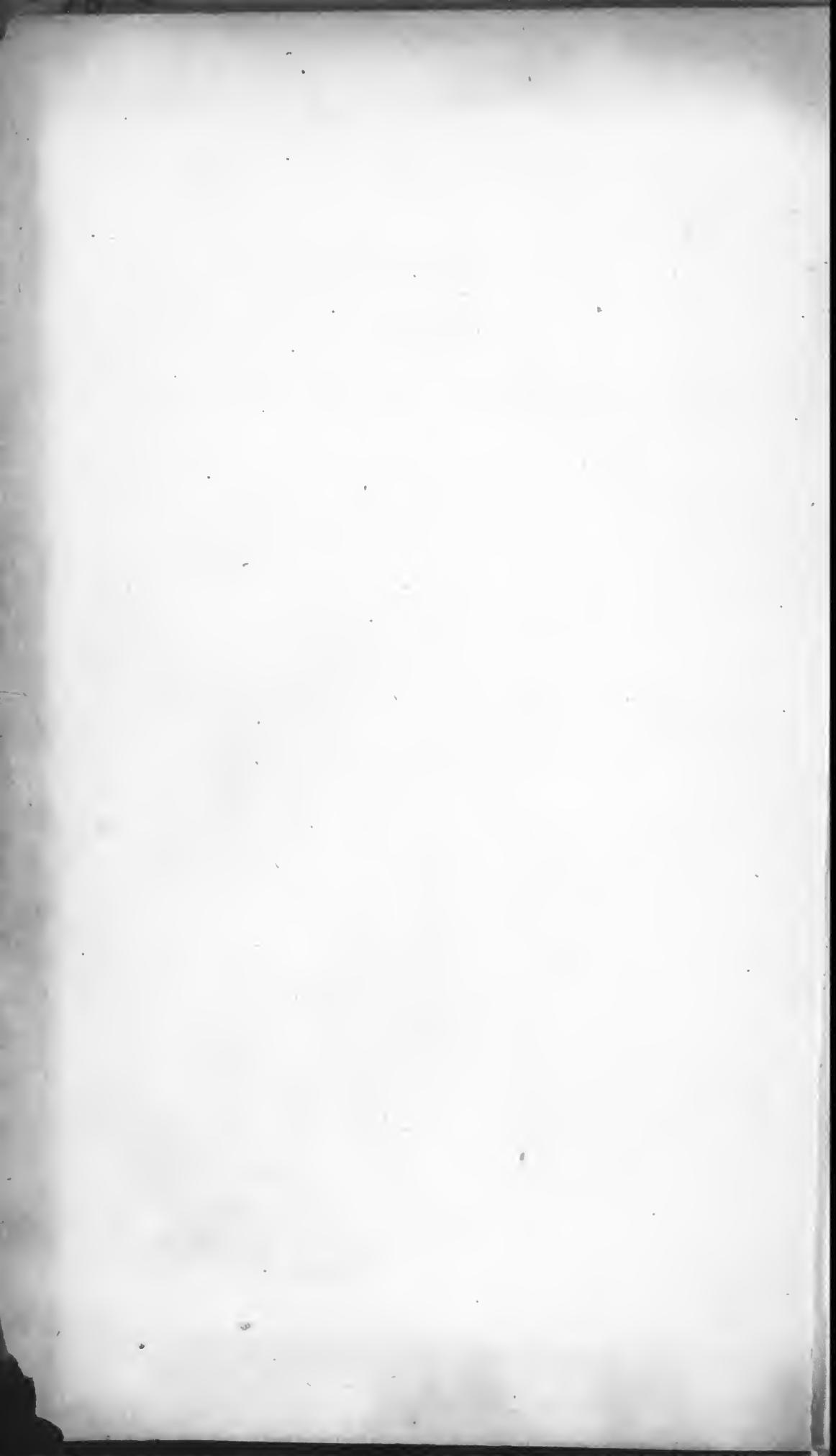
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THE
CATECHISMS
OF THE
WESLEYAN METHODISTS:
COMPILED AND PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF
THE CONFERENCE,
FOR THE USE OF THE FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS
CONNECTED WITH THAT BODY.

No. I.—*For Children of Tender Years.*

WITH AN APPENDIX,
*Containing a Short Catechism of Scripture-Names; and
Prayers for Little Children.*

EIGHTH EDITION.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED AND SOLD BY J. MASON,
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ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.

R. Needham, Printer, Paternoster-Row.

Wes. 2191

A SERIES OF CATECHISMS, &c.

SECT. 1.—OF GOD.

Who made you?

God.

What is God?

An Infinite and Eternal Spirit, one that always was, and always will be.

Where is God?

Every where.

What can God do?

Whatever he will.

Does God know all things?

Yes, every thought in man's heart, every word, and every action.

Will he call us to account for all we think and do?

Yes : for at the last day every work shall be brought into judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good or evil.

Does God love you?

Yes : he loves every thing which he has made.

What has God made?

Every thing, and in particular *Man*.

SECT. 2.—THE CREATION OF MAN.

How did God make man?

He made his body out of the dust of the earth.

Did his soul come from the dust?

No, "The Lord God—breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." (Gen. ii. 7.) X

Why did God make man?

That he might know and love God, and be happy with him for ever.

Where did God put the first man and woman?

In the garden of Paradise.

In whose image or likeness was man created?

In the image of God.

In what respects was man made like God?

In knowledge, in holiness, in happiness, and immortality.

SECT. 3.—OF THE FALL OF MAN.

Did our first parents continue happy and holy?

No, they sinned against God, and fell into misery.

What is sin?

Any transgression of the law of God.

What law did God give to our first parents in Paradise?

He commanded them not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Did they keep this command?

No, they did eat of it.

What evil did they bring upon themselves thereby ?

They were driven out of Paradise, and became subject to guilt, and pain, and death.

Did their sin hurt any beside themselves ?

Yes, all mankind.

How did it hurt them ?

All mankind are born in sin, so that their hearts are corrupt, and inclined only to evil, and they are become subject to pain and death.

How are men born in sin ?

We are all born proud, self-willed, lovers of the world, and not lovers of God.

SECT. 4.—OF THE REDEMPTION OF MAN.

By whom are we to be saved from sin ?

By Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God.

What did Jesus Christ do to save us ?

He was made man, suffered death in our stead, rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven.

What may we gain by his living and dying for us ?

Forgiveness of sin, and holiness, and heaven.

But will he save all mankind ?

No, only those who repent, and believe in him.

What is it to repent ?

To be sorry for my sins, to confess and

forsake them, and to seek forgiveness from God.

What is it to believe in Christ ?

To receive his words, and to trust only in the merits of his death for salvation.

Can you do all this of yourself ?

I cannot do it of myself; but God will help me by his Holy Spirit if I ask it of him.

What will become of those who do not repent and forsake their sins, and believe in Christ, and obey him ?

When they die, they will be cast into hell.

SECT. 5.—OF HEAVEN AND HELL.

What sort of a place is hell ?

A dark and bottomless pit, full of fire and brimstone.

How will the wicked be punished there ?

Their bodies will be tormented by fire, and their souls by a sense of the wrath of God.

How long will these torments last ?

For ever and ever.

Where will believers go after death ?

To heaven.

What sort of a place is heaven ?

A place of light and glory.

How will good men live there ?

In joy and happiness for ever.

Will they suffer nothing there ?

No, they will have no want, nor pain, nor sin.

What sort of bodies will they have?

Such as can never die, made like the glorious body of Jesus Christ.

How will they be employed?

In praising and serving God, and in acts of love towards one another.

What kind of person must you become that you may go to this glorious and happy place?

I must be holy in heart and life.

What is it to be holy in heart?

To be saved from anger, pride, the love of the world, and other sins; and to love God with all my heart, and mind, and soul, and strength.

What is it to be holy in life?

To do my duty to God and man according to God's holy word.

What is your duty to God?

My duty to God is to obey his laws, to honour him, and worship him.

What is your duty to man?

My duty to man is, to obey my parents, to reverence my superiors, to speak the truth always, and to be just, kind, and forgiving to all men.

How can you do this?

By the grace of God.

What is this grace?

The power of the Holy Ghost enabling us to believe, and to love and serve God.

How are we to seek this?

In a constant and careful use of the means of grace.

Which are the chief means of grace?

Private and public Prayer, searching the Scriptures, hearing God's word preached, the Lord's Supper, and Fasting.

How long is every Christian to use the means of grace?

To his life's end. *X*

Let me hear you repeat the Lord's prayer?

OUR Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name: thy kingdom come: thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven: give us this day our daily bread: and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Rehearse the articles of your belief?

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell: the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church;

the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

APPENDIX TO No. I.

A SHORT CATECHISM OF SCRIPTURE-NAMES, FOR CHILDREN OF THE SAME AGE.

Who was Adam?

The first man that God made, and the father of us all.

Who was Eve?

The first woman, and the mother of us all.

Who was Cain?

Adam's eldest son, who killed his brother Abel.

Who was Abel?

A better man than Cain; and therefore Cain hated him.

Who was Enoch?

A man who pleased God, and who was taken up to heaven without dying.

Who was Noah?

That good man who was saved when the world was drowned.

Who was Abraham?

The Pattern of Believers, and the Friend of God.

Who was Isaac?

Abraham's son according to God's promise.

Who was Jacob?

Isaac's younger son.

Who was Joseph?

Jacob's beloved son; but his brethren hated him, and sold him for a slave.

Who were the twelve Patriarchs?

The twelve sons of Jacob, and the fathers of the People of Israel.

Who was Pharaoh?

The King of Egypt, who was drowned in the Red Sea, with his army.

Who was Moses?

The deliverer and lawgiver of the people of Israel, who led them through the wilderness.

Who was Aaron?

Moses's brother, and the first High Priest of Israel.

Who were the Priests?

They who offered sacrifices to God, and taught his laws to men.

Who was Joshua?

The leader of Israel when Moses was dead, who brought them into the Promised Land.

Who were the Prophets?

Persons whom God taught to foretell things to come, and to make known his mind to the world.

Who was David?

The man after God's own heart, who was raised from a shepherd to be King of Israel.

Who was Absalom?

David's wicked son, who rebelled against his father, and he was killed as he hung on a tree.

Who was Solomon?

David's beloved son, a King of Israel, and the wisest of men.

Who was Elijah?

The Prophet who was carried to heaven in a chariot of fire.

Who was Daniel?

The Prophet who was cast into a den of lions, because he prayed to the true God, and was preserved unhurt.

Who were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?

The three Jews, who would not worship an image; for which cause they were cast into a fiery furnace, but yet were not burned.

Who was JESUS CHRIST?

The SON of GOD, and the Saviour of men.

Who was the Virgin Mary?

The Mother of JESUS CHRIST.

Who was Joseph the Carpenter?

The supposed father of Christ, because he married his mother.

Who were the Jews?

The family of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom God chose for his own people.

Who were the Gentiles?

All the nations besides the Jews.

Who were the Cæsars?

The Emperors of Rome, and the rulers of a great part of the world.

Who was Herod the Great?

The King of Judea, who killed all the children in Bethlehem, hoping to kill Christ.

Who was John the Baptist?

The Prophet who told the Jews that Christ was come.

Who was the other Herod?

The King of Galilee, who cut off John the Baptist's head.

Who were the Disciples of Christ?

Those who learned of him as their Master.

Who was Lazarus?

A friend of Christ, whom he raised to life when he had been dead four days.

Who was Martha?

Lazarus's sister, who was cumbered too much in making a feast for Christ.

Who was Mary, the sister of Martha?

The woman that chose the better part, and heard Jesus preach.

Who were the Apostles?

Those Twelve Disciples whom Christ chose for the chief Ministers of his Gospel.

Who was Simon Peter?

The Apostle who denied Christ, but soon afterwards wept bitterly for his sin, and was pardoned.

Who was John?

The beloved Apostle, who leaned on the bosom of Christ.

Who was Judas?

The wicked Disciple who betrayed Christ with a kiss.

Who was Caiaphas?

The High Priest who condemned Christ.

Who was Pontius Pilate?

The Governor of Judea, who ordered Christ to be crucified.

Who was Joseph of Arimathea?

A rich man who buried Christ in his own tomb.

Who were the four Evangelists?

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, who wrote the history of Christ's life and death.

Who were Ananias and Sapphira?

A man and his wife who were struck dead for telling a lie.

Who was Stephen?

The first man who was put to death for Christ's sake.

Who was Paul?

A young man who was first a persecutor, but afterwards an Apostle of Christ.

Who was Dorcas?

A good woman who made clothes for the poor, and who was raised from death.

Who was Elymas?

A wicked man, who was struck blind for speaking against the Gospel.

Who was Eutychus?

A youth who slept at sermon, and, falling down, was taken up dead.

Who was Timothy ?

A young Minister, who knew the Scriptures from a child.

Who was Agrippa ?

A King, who was almost persuaded to be a Christian.

PRAYERS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN.

Note : As soon as the Children begin to learn these Catechisms, they should also learn the following Prayers, concluding each with the Lord's Prayer.

The Infant's, or Young Child's Morning Prayer.

ALMIGHTY GOD, the Maker of every thing in heaven and earth : The darkness goes away, and the day-light comes, at thy command : thou art good, and thou doest good continually.

I thank thee that thou hast taken such care of me this night, and that I am alive and well this morning.

Save me, O God, from evil all this day long ; and may I love and serve thee for ever, for the sake of Jesus Christ, thy Son. *Amen.*

Note : The word Amen signifies, that I believe all that I speak, and that I desire from my heart all that I pray for with my lips.

Note : When the Child is five or six years old, he may enlarge this Morning Prayer, by adding the following.

Bestow on me every good thing which I need for my body and soul : assist me by thy Holy Spirit to do thy will : make me always afraid to offend thee, and let me live and die in thy favour.

Hear the prayer of a child, O Lord, and pardon all my sins, because thy beloved Son died once on earth for sinful creatures, though he never sinned himself, and now he lives in heaven to pray for them, and save them : may his name be praised for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Infant's, or Young Child's Evening Prayer.

O LORD GOD, who knowest all things, thou seest me by night as well as by day.

I pray thee, for Christ's sake, forgive me whatsoever I have done amiss this day, and keep me safe all the night, while I am asleep.

I desire to lie down under thy care, and to abide for ever under thy blessing ; for thou art the God of all power and of everlasting mercy. Grant this for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

Note : When the Child is five or six years old, he may enlarge this Evening Prayer by adding the two following paragraphs.

Bless all my friends* as well as myself ; do good to them at all times and in all places, and help me always to serve them in love.

And when I have done thy will here, by thy grace assisting me, and enjoyed thy blessings on earth, then give my soul a place in heaven, that I may there dwell with thee, and with thy Son Jesus Christ : for heaven and earth, and all things in them, are thine for ever and ever. Hear me, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son. *Amen.*

The Young Child's Prayer, for the Lord's Day, to be added to the Morning Prayer.

SUFFER me not, O Lord, to waste this thy day in sin and folly ; but let me worship thee with much delight. Teach me to know more of thee, and to serve thee better than ever I have done before, that I may be made fit to dwell in heaven, where thy worship and service will be everlasting, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

* Here the child may mention father and mother, and other relations.

*The Young Child's Prayer, for the Lord's Day, to
be added to the Evening Prayer.*

O most gracious God, let me never forget the many good things that I have heard this day; but let them abide in my heart so as to amend my life, that I may be able to give a good account of them to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, when he comes to judge the world at the last day, for whose sake I ask all blessings, and to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Lately published, a Seventh Edition of

THE CATECHISMS OF THE WESLEYAN-METHODISTS: No. II :—For Children of Seven Years of Age, and upwards :—with an Appendix, containing a short Catechism of Scripture-History, and Examples of Prayer. Price 4d., or to Schools, 2ls. per 100, in stiff covers.

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N. B. In this Catechism the principles of the first Catechism are enlarged; and Scripture-Proofs are placed under the Answers, where they can receive appropriate illustration from the word of God.

SECT. 1.—OF GOD.

What is God?

An Infinite and Eternal Spirit.

John iv. 24. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

What do you mean by an Infinite Spirit?

One whose knowledge, power, goodness, justice, and other attributes, are not limited by any imperfection or defect.

Psalm cxlvii. 5. Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite.

What do you mean by an Eternal Spirit?

One who is without beginning, and without end.

Ps. xc. 2. From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

Where is God?

Every where.

Jeremiah xxiii. 24. Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord.

*What can God do?
Whatever he will.*

Job xlvi. 2. I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

Matt. xix. 26. Jesus—said unto them, With men this is impossible ; but with God all things are possible.

Does God know all things?

Yes, every thought in man's heart, every word, and every action.

Where is this said in the Scriptures?

In *Psalm cxxxix. 2-4.* Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising ; thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.

What more do the Scriptures teach you concerning God?

That he is holy and righteous, faithful and true, gracious and merciful.

How does it appear from Scripture that he is holy and righteous?

Exod. xv. 11. Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.

Ps. cxiv. 17. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.

How does it appear from the Scriptures that God is faithful and true?

Num. xxiii. 19. God is not a man that he should lie ; neither the son of man, that he should repent.

Deut. xxxii. 4. A God of truth, and without iniquity ; just and right is he.

Where do we learn that he is gracious and merciful?

Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.

Ps. cxlv. 9. The Lord is good to all ; and his tender mercies are over all his works.

Are there more Gods than one?

There is but one only, the living and true God.

Deut. vi. 4. Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord.
Jer. x. 10. The Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting King.

How many persons are there in the Godhead?

There are three Persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

Matt. xxviii. 19. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

In what manner then ought you to think of God?

With fear and love.

Jer. x. 7. Who would not fear thee, O King of nations? for to thee doth it appertain: forasmuch as among all the wise men of the nations, and in all their kingdoms, there is none like unto thee.

Matt. xxii. 37. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

How ought you to speak of God?

With reverence and praise.

Ex. xx. 7. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Ps. lxxxix. 7. God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.

SECT. 2.

OF THE CREATION OF MAN.

Do you know what you are?

I am a creature of God, for he made me,
both body and soul.

Isa. xlvi. 11, 12. Thus saith the Lord,—I have made the earth,
and created man upon it.

Job x. 11. Thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast
fenced me with bones and sinews.

Zecl. xii. 1. The Lord,—formeth the spirit of man within him.

What is your body?

This outward frame.

What is your soul?

That within me which thinks and knows,
wishes and desires, rejoices and is sorry;—
which my body cannot do.

Job xxxii. 8. There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of
the Almighty giveth them understanding.

Job xxxv. 11. God,—who teacheth us more than the beasts of
the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven.

*Wherein doth your soul further differ
from your body?*

My body is made of flesh and blood, and
will die; but my soul is a spirit, and will
live after my body is dead.

Luke xxiv. 39. A spirit hath not flesh and bones.

Eccles. xii. 7. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it
was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Matt. x. 28. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not
able to kill the soul.

Is not your soul then of great value?

Yes, it is more valuable than the whole
world.

Mark viii. 36. What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

Did God create any thing beside man?

Yes, he created the heavens and the earth, and all things which are therein.

Gen. i. 1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Heb. xi. 3. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God.

Why did God create all things?

For the manifestation of his glory, and to give happiness to his creatures.

Ps. xix. 1. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy work.

Ps. xxxiii. 5. The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

Does God preserve all things which he hath made?

Yes : He upholdeth "all things by the word of his power." (*Heb. i. 3.*)

Acts xvii. 28. In him we live, and move, and have our being.

Do all good things which we enjoy come from him?

Yes : "He satisfieth the desire of every living thing." (*Ps. cxlv. 15, 16.*)

What is God's Providence?

His most holy, wise, and powerful preservation and government of all his creatures, and all their actions.

Ps. ciii. 19. His kingdom ruleth over all.

Matt. x. 30. The very hairs of your head are all numbered.

1 Tim. vi. 15. King of kings, and Lord of lords.

Ps. lxxvi. 10. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee ; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.

SECT. 3.—OF THE FALL OF MAN.

You have learned that man was made to know, love, and serve God ; have all men done so ?

No : “ All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” (Rom. iii. 23.)

Did our first parents continue in the state in which God created them ?

No : they fell from that state, by sinning against God.

What is sin ?

Sin is any want of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God.

1 John iii. 4. Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law ; for sin is the transgression of the law.

What was the sin by which our first parents fell from that holy and happy state in which they were created ?

Their eating of the forbidden fruit.

Gen. ii. 16, 17. The Lord God commanded the man saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat ; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it ; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

Gen. iii. 6, 7. When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her ; and he did eat.

Why were they commanded not to eat of this fruit ?

To try them, whether they would obey God or not.

March 1861

Wherein did the evil of eating the forbidden fruit consist?

In their unbelief, and disobedience to God ; to whom, as their Creator, Benefactor, and Governor, they ought to have implicitly submitted themselves.

Into what state did the fall bring mankind ?

The fall brought mankind into a state of sin and misery.

Rom. v. 12. By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

Wherein consists the sinfulness of that state into which man fell ?

It consists in the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature, which is commonly called original sin, together with all actual transgressions which proceed from it.

Rom. v. 19. By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners.

Rom. iii. 10. There is none righteous, no, not one.

Ps. li. 5. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity ; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

In what consists the misery of that state into which man fell.

All mankind being born in sin, and following the devices and desires of their own corrupt hearts, are under the wrath and curse of God, and so are made liable to the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell hereafter.

Eph. ii. 3. And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Gal. iii. 10. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Rom. vi. 23. The wages of sin is death.

By what means were our first parents led to commit so great a sin against God?

By the subtlety of the Devil, who made use of the serpent to beguile Eve.

Gen. iii. 13. And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

Who is the Devil?

The chief of the fallen Angels, who, before the creation of man, sinned against God, and were cast out of Heaven.

Jude 6. The Angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.

What is the present state of these fallen Angels?

They are reserved to the judgment of the great day.

What is their employment?

Their employment is to tempt men to sin, and to lead them to their own place of misery.

1 Pet. v. 8. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

Can they do what they please?

No : God controls their power, and will save from their malice and subtlety all those who put their trust in him.

James iv. 7. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.

Luke xxii. 31, 32. Satan hath desired to have you, that he may

sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.

Rom. xvi. 20. The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet.

Are all wicked people then under the power of Satan?

Yes, "he leads them captive at his will."

(2 Tim. ii. 26.)

How does Satan tempt men to sin?

By putting evil thoughts and desires into their minds, to which they willingly yield.

You see then the sad condition into which all men are brought by sin. They are under the power of Satan, the slaves of sin, and exposed to misery here and hereafter.— Now learn more fully by what means you are to be delivered from this sinful and miserable state.

SECT. 4.—OF THE REDEMPTION OF THE WORLD BY OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

What is redemption?

The deliverance of Man from the guilt, power, pollution, and punishment of sin, and his restoration to the favour and image of God.

Who is the Redeemer of Man?

Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Matt. i. 21. Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins.

Col. i. 14. We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.

1 Thess. i. 10. Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

Who is Jesus Christ?

The eternal Son of God, and the second Person in the glorious Trinity, who became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever.

1 Tim. ii. 5. There is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

John i. 1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John i. 14. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

How did Christ, being the Son of God, become man?

Christ, the Son of God, became man, by taking to himself a true body, and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and was born of her, yet without sin.

Heb. ii. 14. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.

Luke i. 35. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.

Why did the Son of God become man?

That he might be an example of perfect holiness; teach us his heavenly doctrine; and suffer and die in our room and stead.

1 John ii. 6. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself so to walk, even as he walked.

1 Pet. ii. 21. Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps.

John xv. 15. All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

Heb. ix. 28. Christ was once offered, to bear the sins of many.

1 Pet. iii. 18. Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

Wherein did Christ's humiliation consist?

Christ's humiliation consisted in his being born of a woman; in the meanness and poverty of his outward circumstances; in his being forty days tempted of the Devil; in his being despised and rejected of men; in his enduring the cursed death of the cross; and in his being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time.

Isa. liii. 3. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.

Phil. ii. 7, 8. But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Matt. xii. 40. So shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Was it necessary that Christ should thus suffer death upon the cross for our redemption?

Yes, for by that means he offered a full satisfaction and atonement to Divine Justice, for the sins of the whole world.

1 John ii. 2. He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

How did the death of Christ satisfy Divine Justice?

Our sins deserved death; but Christ being both God and man, and perfectly righteous, there was an infinite value and merit in his death, which being undergone for our sakes, and in our stead, Almighty God exercises his mercy, in the forgiveness of sins, consistently with his justice and holiness.

1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold;—but with the precious blood of Christ.

1 Pet. iii. 18. Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.

Rom. iii. 26. That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

What do you learn from the death of Christ?

I learn the infinite evil of sin in the sight of God, who could not suffer it to go unpunished.

Heb. ix. 22. Without shedding of blood is no remission.

What further do you learn from the death of Christ?

I learn that God is love; for “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John iii. 16.)

What more do you learn from the death of Christ?

I learn also that God is a Being of awful Justice, and that in the death of our Lord Jesus, both his Love and Justice are harmonized and glorified.

Isa. liii. 10. It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief.

Rom. iii. 26. To declare—his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Ps. lxxxv. 10. Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Let us then, my dear child, devoutly say with St. Paul, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable Gift;” and with St. John, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us

from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Wherein consisteth Christ's exaltation?

Christ's exaltation consisteth in his rising again from the dead on the third day, in his ascending into heaven, and his sitting at the right hand of God the Father, and in his appointment to judge the world at the last day.

1 Cor. xv. 4. And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.

Mark xvi. 19. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

Acts xvii. 31. He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.

What offices doth Christ execute as our Redeemer?

Christ as our Redeemer executeth the offices of a Prophet, of a Priest, and a King both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation.

Acts iii. 22. Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

Heb. v. 6. Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.

Ps. ii. 6. Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Sion.

How doth Christ execute the office of a Prophet?

Christ executeth the office of a Prophet, in revealing to us, by his word and Spirit, the will of God for our salvation.

John i. 18. No man hath seen God at any time; the only-

begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John xx. 31. These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

John xiv. 26. The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things.

How doth Christ execute the office of a Priest?

Christ executeth the office of a Priest, in his once offering up of himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice, and to reconcile us to God, and in making continual intercession for us.

Heb. ix. 28. Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.

Heb. ii. 17. In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

Heb. vii. 25. He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

How doth Christ execute the office of a King?

Christ executeth the office of a King, in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.

Isa. xxxiii. 22. The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our King ; he will save us.

1 Cor. xv. 25. He must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

Who were the Disciples of Christ?

Those who believed on his word, and became his followers, whilst he was in this world.

Who were the Apostles of our Lord?

Twelve Disciples whom he called to be wit-

nesses of his miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension; and who were to bear testimony of these things to Jews and Gentiles.

What command did Christ give to his Apostles before his ascension into heaven?

Mark xvi. 15, 16. Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

What is the Gospel?

It is the good news of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, contained in the New Testament.

Luke ii. 10, 11. Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Can you more particularly describe the Gospel?

It is, 1. An account of the coming of Jesus Christ into the world, of his teaching, his manner of life, his miracles, his death, and his resurrection. 2. It contains the commands of God to all men, every where, to repent of their sins, and to believe in Christ. 3. It is the promise of God to pardon, sanctify, and save from eternal death, all who thus repent and believe on his Son.

What is Repentance?

True Repentance is a grace of the Holy Spirit, whereby a sinner, from a sense of his sins, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth with grief and hatred of his

sin, turn from it to God, with full purpose of, and endeavours after, future obedience.

Acts xi. 18. Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Acts ii. 37. When they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

Ps. cxix. 59. I thought on my ways and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

What is Faith in general?

It is a conviction of the truth and reality of those things of which God hath told us in the Bible.

Heb. xi. 1. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

What is Faith in Jesus Christ?

Faith in Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive, and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the Gospel.

John i. 12. As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

Phil. iii. 9. And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Is it by Faith in Christ that we are justified?

Yes, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.)

Gal. ii. 16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ.

What is Justification?

Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and ac-

cepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the sake of Christ.

Eph. i. 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

2 Cor. v. 21. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Rom. v. 19. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

What other benefits do we receive at the same time with Justification?

Adoption and Regeneration.

Rom. viii. 1. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

John i. 12. As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.

What is Adoption ?

Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby, upon the forgiveness of sins, we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God.

1 John iii. 1. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Rom. viii. 17. If children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

What blessings do in this life accompany our Justification and Adoption?

A sense of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and hope of the glory of God.

Rom. v. 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom. v. 5. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Rom. viii. 17. And if children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

What is Regeneration, or the New Birth?

It is that great change which God works

in the soul, when he raises it from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. It is the change wrought in the whole soul by the Almighty, when it is created anew in Christ Jesus, when it is renewed after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness.

2 Cor. v. 17. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new.

John iii. 3. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

2 Thess. ii. 13. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit.

What follows from our Regeneration, or being born again?

Then our sanctification being begun, we receive power to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, and to live in the exercise of inward and outward holiness.

1 Peter ii. 2. As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk o the word, that ye may grow thereby.

What is Entire Sanctification?

The state of being entirely cleansed from sin, so as to love God with all our heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and our neighbour as ourselves.

1 Thess. v. 23. The very God of peace sanctify you wholly.

Matt. v. 48. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

1 John iii. 3. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Matt. xii. 33. Make the tree good, and his fruit good.

What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?

The souls of believers at death do imme-

dately pass into glory, while their bodies rest in their graves till the resurrection.

Phil. i. 23. Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ.
1 Thess. iv. 14. Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

What benefits will believers receive from Christ at the resurrection?

At the resurrection, believers, being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and accepted in the day of judgment, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity.

1 Cor. xv. 43. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory.
Matt. x. 32. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.
1 Thess. iv. 17. So shall we ever be with the Lord.

SECT. 5.—OF THE HOLY GHOST.

Is the Holy Ghost, of whom you have spoken, a Divine Person?

The Holy Ghost is the third Person in the Trinity, equal in power and glory to the Father and the Son.

Matt. xxviii. 19. Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Do the Scriptures ascribe any part of the work of creation to the Holy Spirit?

Yes. “The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” (Gen. i. 2.)

Are not works of Providence ascribed to him?

Yes; the preservation of the different kinds of animals, from age to age.

Ps. civ. 30. Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created : and thou renewest the face of the earth.

Were not the Scriptures given by the Inspiration of God?

Yes: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." (2 Tim. iii. 16.)

2 Pet. i. 21. Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

What offices did the Holy Ghost perform for Christ?

He framed the human nature of Christ in the womb of the Virgin, so that he was born without sin ; and gave to him wisdom and grace without measure.

Luke i. 35. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee ; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

Luke ii. 52. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Isa. lxi. 1. The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me ; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek ; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.

What offices does the Holy Ghost perform for those who believe in Christ?

He enlightens their minds to understand the Scriptures ; assists them in their prayers ; bears witness with their spirits that they are the children of God ; comforts them in trouble ; sanctifies them from all sin, in-

ward and outward; fills their hearts with perfect love to God, and to all mankind, and with all other excellent graces and virtues.

Mention a few passages of Scripture to prove this.

John xvi. 13. When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.

Rom. viii. 26. Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Rom. viii. 16. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.

John xiv. 26. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Gal. v. 22, 23. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

What is the Church of Christ?

The whole body of true believers, in every age and place.

What offices does the Holy Ghost perform for the Church of Christ?

He calls and qualifies men, from time to time, to preach the Word, and minister the Sacraments; renders their preaching effectual to the conversion of sinners, and the edification of believers; and is present in all the ordinances of public worship.

Acts xx. 28. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.

1 Thess. i. 5. Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.

John xiv. 16. He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever.

By what means may you obtain the help and comfort of the Holy Spirit?

By prayer.

Luke xi. 13. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.

SECT. 6.—OF THE LAW OF GOD.

What is the Law of God?

The Law of God is his will respecting mankind in general, both as to what they are to do, and to leave undone.

Where is the Law to be found?

In the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

What is said of the excellency of this Law in the Scriptures?

That “the Law is holy, and the Commandment holy, and just, and good.” (Rom. vii. 12.)

Did not Jesus Christ sum up the whole Law of God in two great Commandments?

Yes. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments

hang all the law and the prophets." (Matt. xxii. 37—40.)

Have we not a larger Summary of the Law of God also in the Scriptures?

Yes : in the Ten Commandments, first written by the finger of God on two tables of stone, and given to Moses, but now recorded in the twentieth chapter of the book of Exodus.

Have these Ten Commandments any particular name ?

The Ten Commandments are called the Moral Law, as in substance containing all the moral duties required of all mankind in the Scriptures ; and they are called the *moral* Law also, to distinguish them from the laws given by God to the children of Israel respecting the *ceremonies* of religious worship, and their political duties, which were chiefly binding upon the Israelites only.

Repeat the Ten Commandments.

I. Thou shalt have no other Gods but me.

II. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth : Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them : for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers

upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me ; and show mercy unto thousands in them that love me and keep my commandments.

III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do ; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day ; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt do no murder.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's

wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

What do you chiefly learn by these Commandments?

I learn two things: my duty towards God, and my duty towards my neighbour.

What is your duty towards God?

My duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy Name, his Sabbath, and his Word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life.

What is your duty towards your neighbour?

My duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me: To love, honour, and succour my father and mother: To honour and obey the King, and all that are put in authority under him: To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters: To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters: To hurt nobody by word or deed: To be true and just in all my dealing: To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart: To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my

tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering : To keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity : Not to covet or desire other men's goods ; but to learn and labour truly to get my own living, and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me.

What other information does the Scripture give us respecting the Law of God ?

These ten Commandments are further explained and enforced, and the principles they contain applied to various duties and cases, both in the Old and New Testaments.

Where is this done in particular ?

In our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, and in his Discourses at other times, when he explains the spiritual and extensive meaning of the moral law, and enjoins its observance upon all his disciples, to the end of time.

Matt. v. 17, 18. Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Did our Saviour make any addition to the Ten Commandments ?

Yes. "A new Commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." (John xiii. 34.)

What does this new Commandment mean ?

This new Commandment means, that we should not only love our neighbour as our-

selves; but that we should bear a particular affection for all those who, like ourselves, are the disciples of Christ, by whatever name they are called.

Eph. vi. 24. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

1 John iv. 11. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

1 John iii. 16. We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren

What explanations of the Law of God, as summed up in the Ten Commandments, do we find in the New Testament?

Our Lord hath taught us that the Ten Commandments do not only forbid sin in outward actions, but also in the thoughts and purposes of the mind.

Matt. v. 21, 22. It was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.

Does not St. James teach us that if we break but one of the Commandments, we shall fall into condemnation?

Yes. “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” (James ii. 10.)

Does not our Lord show us who we are to understand by our neighbour, whom we are commanded to love as ourselves?

Yes. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, he has told us that every man, of every nation, is our neighbour, and that if any be

in distress, we are bound to help and relieve them.

Has not our Lord given us another important precept, founded upon our love to our neighbour?

Yes. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." (Matt. vii. 12.)

Has he not also given us certain rules to direct us in our conduct towards our enemies?

Yes. "I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." (Matt. v. 44.)

How does our Lord direct us to behave towards them who have injured us?

We are commanded to forgive them.

Matt. vi. 15. If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Does not the Law of God, as explained and enlarged in the New Testament, contain various commands as to our tempers and dispositions?

Yes; that we ought to be meek and lowly; patient under sufferings, and kind to all men.

Matt. xi. 29. Learn of me, for I am meek.

Luke xxi. 19. In you: patience possess ye your souls.

Gal. vi. 10. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men.

Does it not contain various precepts as to our conduct in the different relations of life?

Yes. 1. As to Husbands and Wives.

Eph. v. 25. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it.

Eph. v. 22. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

2. As to Parents and Children.

Eph. vi. 4. Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Eph. vi. 1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right.

3. As to Masters and Servants.

1 Peter ii. 18. Servants, be subject to your own masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

Col. iv. 1. Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.

4. As to obedience to Magistrates and Governors.

Rom. xiii. 1. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

1 Peter ii. 17. Honour all men; love the brotherhood; fear God; honour the King.

5. As to Ministers of the Gospel.

Heb. xiii. 17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account.

To what end serveth the Law of God?

The Law of God serveth, in the first place, as the rule of our conduct; and in the second, to convince us of sin; for "by the Law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 20.)

Rom. iii. 23. All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

Ps. xix. 12. Who can understand his errors?

Are all transgressions of the law equally great?

Some sins in themselves, and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.

John xix. 11. He that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

What doth every sin deserve?

Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come.

Gal. iii. 10. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Rom. vi. 23. The wages of sin is death.

Does the Law of God promise the pardon of sin to those who have transgressed it?

No: pardon is promised only in the Gospel, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then all who do not repent of their sins, and believe in Christ, as before explained, must remain for ever under the curse and vengeance of this just and holy law?

Yes; for "He that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 16.)

But might you not obtain forgiveness by repenting, and keeping the law of God in future?

This I am not able to do without the grace of Christ; for "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Rom. viii. 8.) But if I could, present obedience cannot atone for

my past sins, every one of which lays me under the curse of the law.

Well then, trusting in the merits of Christ, as a helpless, guilty, and undone sinner, you will obtain the remission of your sins ; and being regenerated by the Holy Spirit, will you be enabled by his help thenceforward to please God and keep his Commandments ?

Yes ; “ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh ; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” (Rom. viii. 3, 4.)

1 John iii. 9. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.

Seeing, therefore, that you can only be saved from your natural misery and sinfulness by Jesus Christ, flee to him for refuge ; earnestly praying to him for forgiveness of your past sins, and for a new heart and a right spirit, that you may supremely love and faithfully serve him all the days of your life.

SECT. 7.—OF THE SACRAMENTS.

How many Sacraments hath Christ ordained in his Church?

Two: Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

What mean you by the word Sacrament?

I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

What is the outward and visible sign or form in Baptism?

The application of water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (Matt. xxviii. 19.)

What is the inward and spiritual grace signified by this?

Our being cleansed from sin, and becoming new creatures in Christ Jesus.

Acts xxii. 16. Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

What are the actual privileges of Baptized Persons?

They are made Members of the visible Church of Christ; their gracious relation to Him as the Second Adam, and as the Mediator of the New Covenant, is solemnly

ratified by divine appointment; and they are thereby recognized as having a claim to all those spiritual blessings, of which they are the proper subjects.

What doth your Baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, oblige you to do?

My Baptism obliges me first to renounce the Devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the Christian Faith; and thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.

Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?

For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.

What is the outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper?

Bread and wine, which the Lord hath commanded to be received.

1 Cor. xi. 23—26. The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took *bread*.—After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, —This do,—in remembrance of me. For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

What is the thing signified by this outward sign?

The body and blood of Christ, which are

spiritually taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper, to the strengthening and refreshing of their souls.

1 Cor. x. 16. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

John vi. 54, 55. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life.—For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

Why ought we to partake of the Lord's Supper regularly and frequently?

1. In obedience to Christ's commandment, "This do in remembrance of me." (Luke xxii. 19.)

2. To make a holy profession of Christ and his cross, by declaring our entire dependance on his death as the only atonement for our sins, and as our only hope of salvation.

3. To declare our love and thankfulness to him ; and to enjoy communion with God, and with our fellow-christians, in the remembrance of Christ's death.

What is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper.

To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life ; and whether they have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death, and are in charity with all men.

1 Cor. xi. 28. Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

SECT. 8.—OF THE WORD OF GOD, AND PRAYER.

In what is the Word of God contained?

In the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

How are we to use the Word of God to our benefit?

By frequently and seriously reading and hearing it, with prayer to God, that his Holy Spirit may show us its meaning, and apply it to our hearts.

John v. 39. Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.

Rom. x. 17. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

With what disposition of mind ought we to read and hear God's Holy Word?

With a meek and teachable disposition; with faith; and an intention to practise it, by God's grace.

James i. 21. Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

Matt. xi. 25. At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

Heb. iv. 2. The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

John vii. 17. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.

Ought we not often to think upon what we have heard and read?

Yes; we ought to lay up the word of God

in our hearts, and meditate therein day and night.

Psalm cxix. 11. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Luke ii. 19. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

What is Prayer?

Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgement of his mercies.

Psalm lxii. 8. Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before him: God is a refuge for us.

John xvi. 23. Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

Dan. ix. 4. And I prayed unto the Lord my God, and made my confession.

Phil. iv. 6. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.

Where are we required to offer up our prayers and thanksgivings?

Publicly, in the house of God; and privately in our closets.

Psalm c. 4. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

Matt. vi. 6. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

What rule hath God given for our direction in prayer?

The whole word of God is of use to direct us in prayer; but the special rule of direction is that form of prayer which Christ taught his disciples, commonly called the Lord's Prayer.

Repeat that Prayer?

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil : for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

What doth the preface of our Lord's Prayer teach us ?

The preface of our Lord's Prayer, which is, " Our Father which art in heaven," teaches us to draw near to God with all holy reverence and confidence, as children to a father, able and ready to help them ; and that we should pray with and for others.

Isa. lxiv. 9. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever : behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people.

Rom. viii. 15. Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear ; but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Luke xi. 13. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ?

Ephes. vi. 18. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

What do we pray for in the first petition ?

In the first petition, which is, " Hallowed be thy name," we pray that God would enable us, and others, to glorify him in all that

whereby he maketh himself known, and that he would dispose all things to his own glory.

Psalm lxvii. 1—3. God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

Rom. xi. 36. Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

What do we pray for in the second petition?

In the second petition, which is, “Thy kingdom come;” we pray, that Satan’s kingdom may be destroyed, that the kingdom of grace may be advanced, ourselves and others brought into it, and kept in it; and that the kingdom of glory may be hastened.

Psalm lxviii. 1. Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him.

Psalm li. 18. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

2 Thess. iii. 1. Brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.

Rom. x. 1. My heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

Rev. xxii. 20. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

What do we pray for in the third petition?

In the third petition, which is, “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven,” we pray, that God by his grace would make us able and willing to know, obey, and submit to his will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

Psalm cxix. 34—36. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law: yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me

to go in the path of thy commandments : for therein do I delight. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies.

Acts xxi. 14. When he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

Psalm ciii. 20. Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. 22. Bless the Lord, all his works in all places of his dominion, bless the Lord, O my soul.

What do we pray for in the fourth petition?

In the fourth petition, which is, “ Give us this day our daily bread,” we pray, that of God’s free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them.

Prov. xxx. 8. Remove far from me vanity and lies : give me neither poverty nor riches : feed me with food convenient for me.

Psalm xc. 17. Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us : and establish thou the work of our hands upon us ; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

What do we pray for in the fifth petition?

In the fifth petition, which is, “ And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,” we pray that God, for Christ’s sake, would freely pardon all our sins, which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because, by his grace, we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

Psalm li. 1. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness ; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Dan. ix. 17, 19. Cause thy face to shine,—for the Lord’s sake. O Lord, hear ; O Lord, forgive ;—for thine own sake.

Matt. vi. 14. If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

What do we pray for in the sixth petition?

In the sixth petition, which is, “ And lead

us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," we pray that God would either keep us from being brought into such circumstances as will specially tempt us to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

Matt. xxvi. 41. Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.

Psalm xix. 13. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins ; let them not have dominion over me.

Psalm li. 10—12. Create in me a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ; and uphold me with thy free Spirit.

What does the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer teach us ?

The conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, which is, " For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever, Amen ; " teacheth us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to him ; and in testimony of our desire and assurance to be heard, we say, Amen.

Dan. ix. 18, 19. We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear ; O Lord, forgive ; O Lord, hearken and do ; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God.

1 Chron. xxix. 11, 13. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty ; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine. Now, therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name.

Rev. xxii. 20. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

Rehearse the Articles of your Belief.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth : and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord ; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate was

crucified, dead, and buried ; he descended into hell ; the third day he rose again from the dead ; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty : from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost ; the Holy Catholic Church ; the Communion of Saints ; the forgiveness of sins ; the resurrection of the body ; and the life everlasting. Amen.

SECT. 9.

OF DEATH AND JUDGEMENT.

What is Death ?

The separation of the soul from the body.

Will all men die ?

Yes ; all but those who shall be alive at Christ's second coming to judge the world.

Is it not a fearful thing to die ?

Yes, to all but true Christians.

Why is it not a fearful thing to them to die ?

Because sin, which is the sting of death, is taken away from them, and because they know that after death they shall go to heaven.

1 Cor. xv. 55, 57. O Death, where is thy sting ? O Grave, where is thy victory ? Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. v. 1. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

When will Christ appear to judge the world?

When all the prophecies in the holy word of God shall have been accomplished, and the Gospel shall have been preached to all nations.

Matt. v. 18. Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Matt. xxiv. 14. And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

In what manner will Christ come to judge the world?

Suddenly, and in pomp and great glory.

1 Thess. v. 2. The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

Rev. i. 7. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.

1 Thess. iv. 16. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.

Will all men be brought before him to be judged?

Yes; not only those who are alive at his coming, but all the dead shall be raised up and stand before him.

Acts xxiv. 15. There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

Rev. xx. 12. I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

How will Christ the judge dispose of men, and deal with them, at the day of judgment?

He will place the righteous on his right hand, and the wicked on his left.

Matt. xxv. 32, 33. He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Will all the actions of men be brought into judgment?

Yes; God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil. (*Eccles. xii. 14.*)

What sentence will Christ pronounce on the wicked?

Matt. xxv. 41. Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels.

What sentence will he pronounce on the righteous?

Matt. xxv. 34. Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

What shall then take place?

The world shall be destroyed by fire, and the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal; the misery of the former, and the happiness of the latter, being equally endless.

Rev. xx. 11. I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

2 Peter iii. 10. The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up.

Psalm ix. 17. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.

Rev. xxi. 4. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.

My dear child, consider what has been just said; think upon all these serious things; and as you are exhorted by the holy

Apostle Peter, “ Be diligent, that you may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless ; ” for “ seeing all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness ? ”

APPENDIX TO No. II.

A SHORT CATECHISM OF SCRIPTURE HISTORY.

(I.) THE HISTORY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

How long was God in making the world?

He made it by his Word in the space of six days, and he rested on the seventh, and called that day holy.

Who were the first man and woman God made?

Adam and Eve.

In what state did God make them?

God made them in his own likeness, in a holy and happy state.

How did they behave themselves? Did they continue in this state?

No: they sinned against God by eating of the fruit of a certain tree, which God had forbidden them on pain of death.

How came they to eat of this fruit?

The evil spirit, that entered into the Ser-

pent, persuaded Eve to eat of it, and she persuaded Adam.

What mischief followed from hence?

Sin and death were brought into this world by Adam's disobedience, and spread among all his children.

Were Adam's children all sinners?

All of them were born in sin; but there were some in those early times who learned to know and worship the Lord, and were called the sons of God.

Did the knowledge and worship of God abide in their families?

In the following ages all mankind grew so bad, that God drowned the world by a flood of water.

Who was saved when the world was drowned?

Noah, a righteous man, was saved, with all his family, and a few living creatures of every kind.

How was Noah saved?

In an ark, or great vessel of wood, which God taught him to build.

Who were the sons of Noah?

Shem, Ham, and Japhet; and by them the world was peopled after the flood.

Who was the most eminent servant of God, in the family of Shem?

Abraham, who was called the father of believers, and the friend of God.

Why was he called the father, that is, the pattern of believers?

Because he believed certain promises of God, though contrary to the present appearance of things.

What were those promises?

(1.) That he should have a son when he was a hundred years old; (2.) That his children should possess the land of Canaan, wherein he had not a foot of ground; and, (3.) That all nations should be blessed by his offspring, that is, Christ.

Why was Abraham called the friend of God?

Because God made many visits to him, and he was very obedient to God.

Which was the first great instance of Abraham's obedience?

He left his own country at God's command, not knowing whither he was to go.

Give another great instance of Abraham's obedience?

He was ready to offer up in sacrifice his beloved son Isaac at the command of God.

Was Isaac a good man?

Yes; he feared the God of his father Abraham, and he went out to pray, and meditate, in the fields.

Who were Isaac's two sons?

Esau the eldest, and Jacob the youngest.

What is remarkable concerning Esau?

He despised the privileges of being the first-born, and sold it to Jacob for a mess of pottage.

What is written concerning Jacob?

He obtained his father's blessing by deceit; as well as his brother's birth-right by craft.

Why was his name called Israel?

Because he afterwards became a very good man, and prevailed in obtaining a blessing from God, for which he had prayed.

How many sons had Jacob or Israel?

Twelve; who were called the twelve Patriarchs or fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel.

Who was the most famous of Israel's sons?

Joseph, whom his brethren sold into Egypt, and he afterwards became the ruler of the land under Pharaoh the King.

Did not he then revenge himself upon his brethren?

No; he sent for them and their families, together with his father, in the time of famine, and fed them all in the land of Egypt.

Did the families of Israel continue to dwell in Egypt?

Yes, till another Pharaoh, King of Egypt,

made slaves of them, and drowned their male children ; and then God delivered them by the hand of Moses.

Who was this Moses ?

He was one of the children of Israel, who was wondrously saved from drowning by Pharaoh's own daughter, when he was a child.

How did God appoint him to deliver Israel ?

God appeared to him in a burning bush, as he was keeping sheep, and sent him to Pharaoh to bid him let Israel go.

What did Moses do to prove that God had sent him ?

He wrought several miracles, or signs and wonders, in the sight of Pharaoh.

How did Moses at last deliver the people from their slavery ?

When Pharaoh refused to let the people go, God gave him power to smite Egypt with many plagues.

What was the last of those plagues which procured the release of Israel ?

An angel destroyed all the first-born of the Egyptians in one night, but he passed over and did not hurt any of the families of Israel.

How was this kept in remembrance in following ages ?

God appointed the yearly sacrifice of a

lamb in every family, which was called the Feast of the Passover.

When Pharaoh let Israel go out of Egypt, how did they get over the Red Sea?

Moses with his rod divided the waters of the sea asunder, and the people went through upon dry ground.

What became of the Egyptians that followed them?

When Moses stretched his hand over the sea, the waters returned upon the Egyptians, and they were all drowned.

Whither did the children of Israel go then?

They went through the wilderness wheresoever God guided them, by a pillar of cloud in the day-time, and a pillar of fire in the night.

How long was it before they came to the land of Canaan, which God promised?

They wandered forty years in the wilderness for their sins.

What did they eat all that time?

God fed them with manna, or bread that came down every night from heaven.

What did they drink in the wilderness?

Moses smote the rock with his rod, and waters gushed out in a river that followed them.

What were the laws which God gave the Israelites, when he chose them for his own people?

Some general laws that related to their behaviour as men, some special rules relating to their religion as a church, and others about their government as a nation.

What were the general laws which related to their behaviour as men?

Those laws which are commonly called moral, and which belong to all mankind: these are chiefly contained in the Ten Commandments.

In what manner was this moral law, or Ten Commandments, given them?

God spake it to them from Mount Sinai, with thunder and lightning, and then wrote it for them in two tables of stone.

What were the special laws which God gave them, relating to their religion as a church?

Many rules about the worship of God, about their priests and sacrifices, about sprinkling of blood, and washing with water, and about holy times and holy places.

What was the chief design of these ceremonies?

Partly to keep them from the idolatry and evil customs of other nations, and partly to figure out the blessings of Christ and the Gospel.

What were their peculiar laws, considered as a nation?

Such as related to their peace and wars,

to their houses and lands, to their wives and servants, to their lives and limbs.

Why did God himself give them such particular rules about these common things?

To distinguish them from all other nations as God's own people, and to show that he was their King as well as their God.

Were the people of Israel obedient to God in their travels through the wilderness?

No : they sinned grievously against him : and they were often punished by the hand of God, but he would not utterly destroy them.

Who brought them into the land of Canaan after their forty years' wandering in the wilderness?

Moses being dead, Joshua (whose name is the same with Jesus) brought them into the promised land.

Did the Israelites behave themselves better when they were come to Canaan?

No : they frequently fell into idolatry, and worshipped the false gods of the nations round about them.

In what manner did God show his displeasure for this sin?

He gave them up sometimes into the hands of their enemies, who plundered them and made slaves of them.

How did God deliver them from the hands of their enemies?

When they cried to the Lord he raised up Judges, who subdued their enemies, and delivered the people.

What were the names of some of the chief of these Judges?

Gideon and Jephthah, Samson, Eli, and Samuel.

Who governed the people of Israel after the Judges?

They desired a King, like other nations, and God bade Samuel anoint Saul to be the first of their Kings.

How did Saul behave himself?

He governed well for a little time, but afterwards he rebelled against God, and God removed him.

What became of Saul at last?

Being forsaken of God, and being wounded in battle by the Philistines, he fell on his own sword and died.

Who was the second King of Israel?

David, who was raised to the kingdom from keeping of sheep.

What was David's character?

He was a Prophet, and the man after God's own heart, who delivered Israel from their enemies, and ruled them well.

But was not David guilty of some great sins?

Yes; and God punished him for them in the great troubles he met with in his family.

Who was the third King of Israel?

Solomon, the Son of David, who was the wisest of men.

What did Solomon do for God and for the people?

He built a very splendid temple for the worship of God at Jerusalem.

What became of the people of Israel in the following ages?

They were divided into two kingdoms, which were called the kingdom of Judah, and the kingdom of Israel.

How did they behave themselves toward God after this division?

Most of their Kings, as well as the people, provoked God by their idols, and their great wickedness.

How did God punish them for their crimes?

When they would not hearken to the prophets which God sent among them, they were carried away captive by their enemies into the land of Assyria.

Did they never return again to their own land?

Yes; after seventy years' captivity the tribe of Judah returned, with many of Benjamin and Levi, and they were all called Jews.

What did they do at their return?

They built the city of Jerusalem and the temple again, and they set up the worship of the true God.

Did they continue afterwards to obey God, and dwell in their own land?

Though they were guilty of many sins, they never fell into the worship of idols again : nor were they ever wholly driven again out of their own land, till after the coming of the Messiah the Saviour.

(II.) THE HISTORY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Who is the Messiah, the Saviour of mankind?

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was sent down from heaven to save sinners.

How did he come into the world?

God prepared a body for him, which he assumed, being born of a woman.

What notices were given of the coming of Christ the Saviour?

Many promises had been given of him in former ages by the prophets, and more lately by an angel.

What did the prophets foretell concerning the coming of Christ?

Among many other things, they declared, that a Saviour should be born of the stock of Abraham, of the house of David, and in the town of Bethlehem.

How did an angel give notice of his coming?

The angel Gabriel foretold the birth of John the Baptist to prepare the way of Christ, and he told the mother of Jesus, that she should bring forth the Son of God.

Who was the mother of Christ?

Mary, a virgin of the house of David.

Who was the supposed father of Christ?

Joseph the carpenter was supposed to be his father, because he married his mother, Mary.

What further witness was given to Christ in his infancy?

By angels from heaven, by wise men from the East, and by Simeon in the Temple.

How did the angels bear witness to him?

They sang praises to God in the air at his birth, and told the shepherds that they should find the child Jesus in a manger at Bethlehem.

What witness did the wise men of the East bear to Jesus?

They saw a strange star in the East, which led them to the house where the infant lay, and they came and worshipped him.

What honour did Simeon do him in the Temple?

He was an old man, yet God assured him that he should see the Saviour before he died; and he took Jesus in his arms, and acknowledged him to be the Christ.

When did Christ begin his public ministry?

At thirty years of age he came forth and was baptized by John, who was sent from God to preach and to baptize with water.

What was the doctrine which John the Baptist preached?

He reproved sinners; he preached repentance and the forgiveness of sins; and he directed his disciples to Jesus as the Saviour.

What became of John the Baptist at last?

He was beheaded by Herod, at the wicked request of his niece, when she had pleased him with her fine dancing.

What honour was done to Christ at his baptism?

The Spirit of God, like a dove, descended upon him, and a voice came from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

What became of Christ immediately after his baptism?

He was forty days in the wilderness, where he endured the temptations of the Devil, and overcame the tempter.

What were the chief parts of the ministry of Christ in his life?

These five, namely,—1. He fulfilled the whole law, and gave us a perfect example of piety towards God, and goodness to men.

2. He preached to the people his divine doctrine which he brought from heaven.

3. He wrought miracles to prove that he was sent from God.

4. He chose out his Apostles, and trained them up for their public service.

5. He appointed two lasting ordinances in his church.

Wherein did he give an example of piety towards God?

In his constant obedience to God his Father in all things, in his zeal for God's honour among men, and in his frequent converse with God in prayer.

Wherein did he show a pattern of goodness toward men?

He went about doing good to the bodies and souls of men ; he was full of compassion to the miserable ; and he took children in his arms and blessed them.

What were the chief subjects of Christ's preaching to the people?

These six things :—(1.) He explained the law of God to the people, and showed them

that it required holiness in their thoughts, as well as in their words and actions.

(2.) He reproved and condemned many for their sinful and foolish traditions, and taught them that God did not regard ceremonies, so much as the great duties of love to God and love to men.

(3.) He preached the Gospel of pardon of sin and eternal life in heaven, to them that repent and believe in him.

(4.) He threatened the eternal punishment of hell to all wilful and obstinate sinners, particularly to hypocrites and unbelievers.

(5.) He sometimes declared and maintained his own commission, that he was sent from God to be the Saviour of men.

(6.) He foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, and his own second coming in glory to raise the dead, and to judge the world.

What were the chief miracles which he wrought to prove that he was sent from God?

Such as these :—(1.) He fed many thousand persons twice with a very few loaves and fishes.

(2.) He gave sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf; he made the dumb to speak, the lame to walk ; and healed all manner of diseases by a word.

(3.) He commanded evil spirits to depart

out of the bodies of many whom they had possessed.

(4.) He raised several persons from the dead, and one (namely, Lazarus) out of the grave.

How did he train up his Apostles for their public service?

In these four ways :—(1.) He explained to them in private what he taught the people by parables and similitudes in public.

(2.) He told them more plainly that he was the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, and that he should die as a ransom for sinners, and rise again the third day.

(3.) He prayed with them often, and taught them to pray.

(4.) He promised them to send the Spirit of God after his departure, to fit them for their public service.

What were the two Ordinances which Christ appointed in his Church.

He appointed Baptism and the Lord's Supper, to continue to the end of the world.

Thus we have heard how Jesus lived: let us hear now in what manner he died.

He was meek and patient, and resigned to the will of God in suffering and dying.

What were his sharpest sufferings?

The anguish which he endured in his soul

in the garden just before his death, which made him sweat drops of blood.

What kind of death did he die?

He was crucified ; that is, his hands and feet were nailed to a wooden cross, and there he hung till he died in extreme pain.

When Jesus Christ had honoured God so much in his life, how came he to die so shameful a death?

He was appointed of God to be a sacrifice to take away the sins of men, who had deserved to die.

But what reason had men to kill him?

No just reason at all ; but the teachers and rulers of the Jews hated his doctrine and reproofs, and were much enraged to see the people follow him.

How did they lay hold of Jesus?

They bribed Judas, one of his Apostles, to betray him into the hands of their officers, and he led them to his Master by night, and showed which was he by kissing him.

Did none of the disciples defend their Lord and Master ?

Peter at first defended him with the sword ; but afterwards his courage failed him so far as to deny that he knew him.

Did Peter continue in his sin, or did he repent :

Jesus cast his eye upon him, and he repented and wept bitterly.

Who condemned Christ to die?

Caiaphas, the High Priest, condemned him as worthy of death; and Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor, at the desire of the Jews, gave him up to be nailed to the cross.

Was he crucified immediately, or did he suffer other injuries before his death?

He was mocked, he was spit upon, he was crowned with thorns, he was scourged, and wickedly abused.

In what company was he crucified?

He was crucified in a most shameful manner between two thieves, as if he had been the chief of sinners.

What miracles attended his death?

The sun was darkened at noon for three hours together; there was an earthquake which opened many graves; and the veil of the temple was rent in two pieces.

Who took care of his burial?

Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, and one of his Disciples, buried him in his own new tomb; and Pilate and the Jews set a guard of soldiers about it.

When did he rise from the dead?

On the first day of the week, after he had

lain three days in the grave, that is, part of three days.

To whom did he appear after his rising again?

He appeared many times to his Disciples ; he ate and drank and talked with them, and gave them most certain proof of his resurrection.

How long did he tarry on the earth after his rising from the dead ?

He tarried forty days, conversing with his Apostles, and instructed them further in the Gospel, and in the doctrines and rules of the kingdom.

How did he go up to heaven ?

When he had given his Apostles their commission to preach the Gospel to all nations, and blessed them, they saw him carried up to heaven.

What did the Disciples do when the Lord had left them ?

They returned to Jerusalem, and waited for the Spirit of God to come upon them, according to the promise of Christ.

What was the first thing they did towards their public work ?

They chose Matthias by prayer and by lot, to be an Apostle in the room of Judas the traitor.

What became of Judas?

When he saw that Christ was condemned, he went and hanged himself, and, falling down, his bowels gushed out.

When did the Spirit of God come upon the Apostles and other Disciples?

At the feast of Pentecost, which was about ten days after Christ went to heaven.

In what manner did the Spirit of God come upon them?

A noise like a rushing wind filled the house where they were met, and cloven tongues of fire sat upon them.

What was the first remarkable effect of the coming of the Spirit of God upon them?

Each of them was enabled to preach the Gospel in strange languages.

What was the doctrine they preached?

That Jesus, who was crucified, was the Messiah, that is, the Christ, the Son of God, and the Saviour of men; and that sinners who repent and believe in his name should be saved.

What success had their preaching?

Three thousand were converted and baptized in one day, and a great multitude afterwards.

What miracles did they work to confirm their doctrine?

Some that were cripples had the use of their limbs given them ; multitudes of sick were healed by them ; some persons were struck dead, and others raised to life.

Had not other believers in Christ power to work miracles also ?

Yes ; Jesus Christ communicated very great gifts and powers to them, by laying on of the hands of the Apostles.

Were not the Apostles greatly persecuted ?

Yes ; they were put in prison by the High Priest ; they were beaten by order of the Council ; James the brother of John was slain by Herod ; and Peter was put in prison again in order to be put to death.

Did God give them any miraculous deliverances ?

Several times when the Apostles were imprisoned they were released by angels.

Who was one of the chief persecutors of the Christians at this time ?

Saul, a young man, a zealous Pharisee, who was afterwards called Paul.

Did he live and die a persecutor ?

No ; he was struck down to the ground, as he was going to Damascus to imprison the Christians, while a great light shone round about him, and Jesus Christ called him with a voice from heaven.

What is afterwards related of him?

That he became a zealous preacher of the Gospel ; he was made the Apostle of the Gentiles, and spent his days in travelling to convert the heathen nations.

What became of Paul at last?

After he had done more services for Christ by preaching and writing than any of the other Apostles, and endured more sufferings in his life, he was put to death at Rome as a martyr for Christ.

Is there any further account given of Peter?

When he had laid out his life in preaching the Gospel, and had written letters to the Christians, he was crucified in his old age, as Christ foretold to him.

What is recorded concerning John the Apostle?

After many labours in the ministry, he was banished to the Isle of Patmos, where Jesus Christ appeared to him in visions, and instructed him by his Angel to write the book of the Revelation.

What became of the other Apostles ?

They went into different places preaching the Gospel, and most of them were put to death for the sake of Christ.

EXAMPLES
OF
P R A Y E R,
COMPOSED
FOR CHILDREN FROM SEVEN YEARS OLD TO
TEN OR TWELVE.

The Child's daily Morning Prayer.

GREAT and gracious God, who hast created all things by thy power, and governest all things by thy wisdom, who art the Author of all our blessings, by day and night : I give thee thanks that thou hast given me rest during the night past, and that I am brought to see another morning.

Blessed be thy goodness for my health, for my food and raiment, for the love of my friends, for all blessings in this life, and for my desire to attain that life which is immortal.

O God, be merciful to me a miserable sinner, for his sake whom " thou hast exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins." Help me to feel, bewail, and forsake my offences ; and may I never want the comfortable assurance of thy forgiveness of them and of thy love to me, in the blessed Son of thy eternal love.

O teach me to know thee, my God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. Give me to fear thee, and to love thee, to trust and delight in

thee, and to hate all evil. Strengthen me, O Lord, with thy continued grace, that no temptations may prevail against me ; and that I, through this day, and to the end of my life, may cleave to thee, and follow thee in righteousness of life, in lowliness of mind, and in purity of heart.

Bless our Sovereign the King, and all who are in authority under him, and grant that we may see good days under his government. May thy holy religion spread through these lands, and extend to the end of the earth. Be gracious to all who are near and dear to us, and keep us all in thy fear and love, that we may be so united to thee here, as not to be divided when thou art pleased to call us hence ; and may we dwell with thee in joy, that shall never die, through Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Saviour, who hath taught us when we pray to say, *Our Father, &c.*

The Child's Evening Prayer.

O LORD, our heavenly Father, who hast made the night for us to take our rest, I pray thee look down upon me while I sleep ; for if thou take care of me, I need be afraid of nothing.

Accept the thanks of a child for all the good things I have this day received ; and as I lie down in peace in the evening, so let me awake and rise again in peace in the morning to serve thee.

I implore thy tender mercies in the forgiveness of all my sins, by which I have offended in thought, word, or deed, this day. Pardon me, O Lord, for the sake of thy Son, Jesus Christ, who died upon the cross, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life ; and adopt me into thy family as one of thy children.

. Give me thy Holy Spirit to purify my heart, that I may entirely love thee, and rejoice in knowing that I am loved by thee. Help me to honour my father and mother, to obey my teachers and governors, and to be kind and loving to all men. Provide, O Lord, for my future wants whilst I remain in this world; and may I learn, in whatever state I am, therewith to be content; in every thing giving thanks to thy name. The same blessings I ask for my dear relations and friends, and for all mankind. Let thy way be made known upon earth, and thy saving health unto all nations. Continue thy fatherly care over us this night. O preserve and bless us, and may no evil come nigh our dwelling. Give thy beloved sleep, and thus strengthen me for thy service: and whenever thou callest me to sleep the sleep of death, may I sleep in Jesus, and through the riches of thy grace, and his worthiness, awake in the morning of the resurrection to join the redeemed of the Lord, and spend the day of eternity in the presence of Jesus, and in those mansions of glory which he is gone to prepare for all that love him. Unto him be praise, and honour, and glory, world without end. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

The Child's Grace before Meat.

I BESEECH thee, O Lord, that the food which thou providest for me may strengthen me to perform my daily duties: and as thou preservest my life, let it be spent in thy fear, for the sake of thy Son our blessed Saviour. Amen.

The Child's Grace after Meat.

MAKE me truly thankful, O Lord, for my daily

bread, and for other mercies which I receive.
And help me to love and serve thee, the giver of
all good, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

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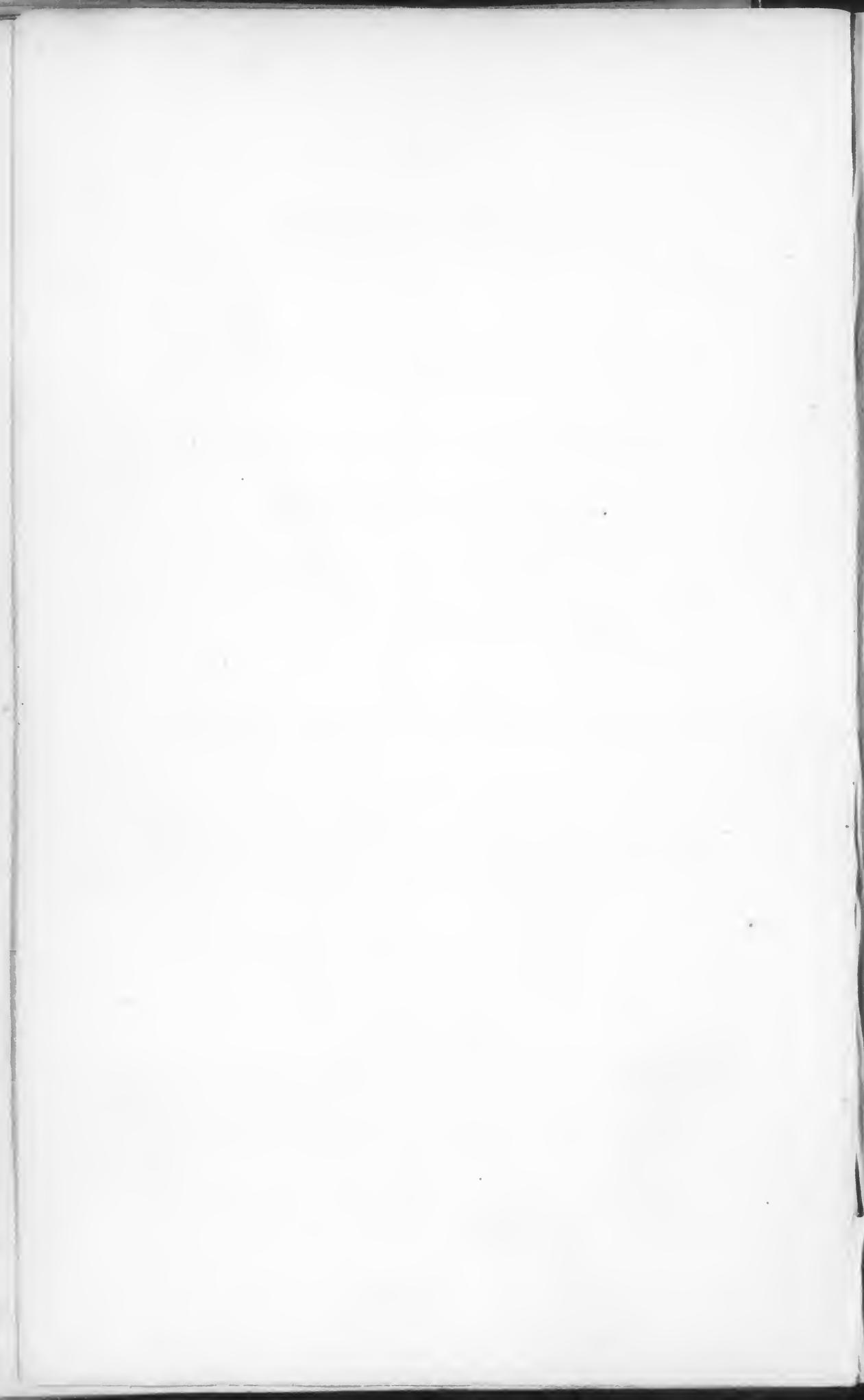
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TRUTH OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

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A SERIES OF CATECHISMS

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ON THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY, AND THE
TRUTH OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS.

Youth. What is CHRISTIANITY?

Teacher. The doctrines, morals, and manner of worship taught by Christ and his Apostles, and recorded in the New Testament.

Y. What is JUDAISM?

T. The religion and laws of the Jews, a people descended from Abraham. These are contained in the books of the Old Testament.

Y. What is the religion of the PATRIARCHS?

T. The belief and worship of the early progenitors of the different nations and families of men before the introduction of idolatry. The Patriarchs, eminently so called, lived before the giving of the law by Moses; and the most illustrious of these were Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Job.

Y. What is meant by REVELATION?

T. A supernatural communication of truth from God to man, by which we are instructed in the will of God respecting us, both as to what we are to believe, and to do ; how we are to worship him ; what we may hope from his mercy, or fear from his displeasure.

Y. Does God make revelations of his will to every man ?

T. Not immediate revelations. He revealed his will first to Adam ; then to Noah, and Abraham, and others among the Patriarchs ; to Moses and the Prophets ; and finally by Christ and his Apostles. We acknowledge no other revelations ; and these were intended, in different degrees, for the benefit of mankind at large.

Y. Have all these revelations been recorded ?

T. No : revelation is distinguished into ORAL and WRITTEN. The revelations which were made to the Patriarchs were transmitted by word of *mouth*, and *handed down* from one age to another. For this reason revelation among them is said to be *oral*, or *traditional*, and the long duration of their lives preserved it from being corrupted. These original truths, doctrines, and traditional facts, were thus transmitted to Moses, who wrote them, and the laws which he received from God in the wilderness of Sinai, in the five books which bear his name, and are called the *Pentateuch*. The other books of the Old Testament, whether historical, poetical, or prophetical, were written by inspired men called *Prophets*, by the command of God, and compose the book called the *Old Testament*. Our Lord committed nothing to writing ; but his life and discourses were written after his resurrection by four of his disciples, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who

"brought all things to their remembrance." The book of the Acts of the Apostles, which contains an account of the first planting of Christianity in the world, was written by St. Luke; the Epistles and the Revelation by different Apostles, all under the influence of the Holy Spirit. These collectively are denominated the New Testament; and the Old and the New Testaments we emphatically call the WORD OF GOD.

Y. Has this collection of divine revelations any other name?

T. Yes; it is also called THE BIBLE, which signifies THE BOOK, to denote its eminence and supreme excellence. The Christian religion is also called "THE GOSPEL," which signifies "*the good news.*" The Jewish religion is called "THE LAW," because of the commands, *moral, ceremonial, and judicial*, which were given to the Jews by Moses.

Y. Is not the Bible sometimes called "the Old and New Testament?"

T. Yes; because in them God enters into *covenant* with man, and engages to bestow certain blessings upon him of his own good pleasure. This covenant under the law was made specially with the Jews, but under the Gospel with both Jews and Gentiles. The former is for this, and for some other reasons, called THE OLD TESTAMENT, or COVENANT; the latter the New, and is perfect, universal, and shall never pass away.

Y. Pray explain another term often used,—DISPENSATION.

T. This word signifies a *dispensing* or *bestowing*; and, in the theological sense, means the truth and grace which have been dispensed in different periods of the world by successive revelations of the will and mercy of God to mankind. For this

reason we say the *Patriarchal*, the *Mosaic* or *Jewish*, and the *Christian dispensations*:—the first commencing with Adam, and reaching to the giving of the law by Moses; the second, from that event to the death of Christ; the third, from the death of Christ to the end of the world.

Y. All this I comprehend: but I would now be more fully instructed in the *PROOFS* that these dispensations are from God; in other words, how the revelations contained in the Old and New Testaments can be shown to be of divine authority.

T. This is a laudable desire; and we will proceed to these proofs step by step, that “you may know the certainty of the things wherein you have been instructed.”

CHAPTER II.

A REVELATION FROM GOD HIGHLY PROBABLE AND NECESSARY.

T. LET our first inquiry be, whether it is probable that man has been left without a revelation of the will of GOD. I ask you, first, what is Moral Agency?

Y. Agency is the *doing* of any thing, and Moral Agency is the *doing* of what is *good* or *evil*, right or wrong. These are called *moral acts*, in opposition to natural acts, as walking, flying, eating, &c., which, in themselves, are neither good nor evil, and incapable of being praised or blamed.

T. Why do you call some actions good or evil, and therefore praise or blame them?

Y. Because they are agreeable or opposed to some rule or law, which determines their nature.

T. By this law do you mean the law of your own or any other country?

Y. Certainly not; for if all national laws were abolished, the actions which mankind have generally agreed to call good or evil would still be regarded as such, and be praised or blamed accordingly.

T. If there has been this general agreement among mankind, when did they agree to form those rules which make certain actions good or evil?

Y. If they did so agree, it must have been at a very early period, even before the forming of mankind into states and nations; for the laws of states are clearly built upon a previous agreement among men, that some actions are good and beneficial, and that others are evil and injurious, and ought to be restrained, as murder, theft, and other vices which affect society. But we have no record of any solemn discussion of so weighty a subject, or of any agreement among mankind to lay down rules or laws, which should first determine the good or evil of actions.

T. But is there no proof that mankind, in the earliest ages of the world, considered various actions as determined to be good and evil by a higher authority than that of MAN?

Y. Yes, certainly: all antiquity agrees in making a distinction between things good and evil, and in representing one to be pleasing, and the other displeasing, to God; one to be the object of reward, and the other of punishment; and consequently, in acknowledging a WILL OR LAW OF

God on these subjects. But what do you conclude from this?

T. That all the evidence which arises from human history goes to establish this point,—that a rule was always known in the world by which men's actions were judged of as good or evil ; and that this rule was the will of God, which, in some mode, was ascertainable by his creatures.

Y. This seems to be indisputable.

T. Then this makes it highly probable that, in the earliest ages, God made an express revelation of his will to mankind ?

Y. This is, also, highly probable from the facts just now mentioned.

T. Let me then ask you, whether man is not a created being ?

Y. This is certain ; for he is born, and changes, and dies, and is, therefore, dependent upon some power which he cannot resist.

T. Then there must have been a first pair from whom we all have descended ?

Y. This also is clear ; and as they could not create themselves, they must have been immediately created by God.

T. Do you see nothing in the nature of man to distinguish him from other animals ?

Y. Yes : I especially observe that he is capable of good and evil actions, which they are not ; that he is therefore a subject of reward and punishment ; that he is capable of reflecting with pleasure or dissatisfaction upon his actions, which faculty we call *conscience*.

T. Does not, then, the very nature which his Maker has given him bear an evident relation to *law* or *rule*, and to *reward* and *punishment* ?

Y. Most clearly ; and from this I see another strong presumption arise, that a creature, who

by his Creator is in his very nature constituted to be capable of moral government, must, from the beginning of his existence, have been placed under a *moral law*.

T. But does not a moral law manifestly suppose a *revelation*?

Y. Truly; because law, being the will of a superior, must be *known* before it can be obligatory; and it belongs to a legislator to *promulgate*, or, in other words, to *reveal* his laws.

T. But suppose it said, that man might *infer* the will of God from natural objects, and the course of divine government, without an express revelation, how would you reply?

Y. I would say, 1. That then the will of God on moral subjects must have been more imperfectly known in the first age, than in the following ages of the world, because men had had less time for observing nature, and less experience of the course of Providence. But this is contrary to all history and all tradition. 2. That by inference they could only at best obtain *imperfect intimations* of the will of God. And, 3. That the will of God would thus be made to depend upon the *opinions* of men, that is, upon the justness and fairness of their inferences, and would, therefore, be a different rule of action in different men; a conclusion which cannot be maintained by any sober person.

T. Your answer is forcible; but you may add, that if man had been left to infer the will of God from the works of nature, and the course of God's government of the world, without a *direct revelation*, there is nothing in either to indicate that God ought to be worshipped; that he will hear our prayers; that there is a state of future rewards and punishments; or that God will pardon

those who have broken his laws, or how that pardon must be sought. On all these subjects, which are essential to *morality, religion, and hope*, the works of nature and the dispensations of Providence are totally silent ; and thus, there could have been no *system of complete and influential morality, and no authorized religious worship, and no hope beyond the grave, without an express revelation.*

Y. All this appears very manifest ; and yet I hear much of the sufficiency of *human reason*, to discover the being and perfections of God from his works, his will respecting us, the immortality of the soul, and other important subjects.

T. This is the constant theme of infidels ; and yet do you not perceive that none of them have gained their knowledge of these truths from *reason*, but that they are all indebted for them to *revelation* ?

Y. Certainly this is the case with the Deists of the present age ; but how does that apply to the philosophers of Rome, Greece, Egypt, and other ancient countries ?

T. Just as forcibly. Not any of the most enlightened of them, whose writings remain, or whose opinions we know, ever pretended to be the discoverers of these truths. They speak of them sometimes believably, sometimes doubtfully, but always as known in the world, and as derived from an earlier age of antiquity.

Y. You suppose, therefore, that these opinions were derived from a common source ?

T. Undoubtedly they were transmitted from an earlier age : for,

1. The wonderful agreement of even the superstitions of all heathen nations, in recognising certain facts of the Mosaic history, is a strong proof,

that they are but perversions of the religion and history of the patriarchal times. Plato, one of the wisest and most learned of the ancient Greek philosophers, says, “After a certain flood, which but few escaped, on the increase of mankind, they had neither letters, writing, nor laws, but obeyed the manners and institutions of their fathers as laws ; and when colonies separated from them, they took an elder for their leader, and in their new settlements retained the customs of their ancestors, *those especially which related to their gods, and thus transmitted them to their posterity ; they imprinted them on the minds of their sons, and they did the same to their children.* This was the origin of right laws, and of the different forms of government.”

2. The practice of sacrifice, which may at once be traced into all nations, and to the remotest antiquity, affords an eminent proof of the common origin of religion ; inasmuch as no reason drawn from the nature of the rite itself, or the circumstances of men, can be given for the universality of the practice : and as it is clearly a positive institute, and opposed to the *interests* of men, it can only be accounted for by an *injunction*, issued at a very early period of the world, and solemnly imposed.

3. The events, and some of the leading opinions of the earliest ages, mentioned in Scripture, may also be traced among the most barbarous, as well as in the Oriental, the Grecian, and the Roman systems of mythology. Such are, the FORMATION OF THE WORLD ; THE FALL AND CORRUPTION OF MAN ; the hostility of a powerful and supernatural agent of wickedness under his appropriate and scriptural emblem, the SERPENT ; the DESTRUCTION OF THE WORLD BY WATER ; the RE-

PEOPLING OF IT BY THE SONS OF NOAH ; the EXPECTATION OF ITS FINAL DESTRUCTION BY FIRE ; and, above all, the *promise of a great and divine DELIVERER.*

4. All nations have dispersed from the patriarchal seats in Asia : this has often been satisfactorily proved. All religions, however superstitious, agree in a common origin. All the great masters of human reason in the ancient world had, therefore, heard of God and his perfections ; of moral distinctions ; of man's immortality ; and of a future state. The best of their notions were in the world long before they lived ; the worst only, by which they corrupted the primitive truths, were of their own invention.

Y. I perceive, then, that human reason has no claim at all, even in these early ages, to the credit of these discoveries : but tell me how it is, that men who reject the Bible are so confident in ascribing so much power to their unaided reason.

T. My answer may, perhaps, surprise you ; but I will prepare you for it by reminding you, that the philosophers of antiquity made no such pretensions, and that this confidence in human reason is the boast only of men where Christianity is already known. The ancient sages confessed the weakness of their understandings, and their inability to discover truth. Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Cicero, and others, all confess their ignorance, and their doubts, on those very subjects which some of the moderns pretend to be clearly discoverable without a revelation ; and the only reason which can be given why infidel philosophers of the present age speak with so much assurance as to their own ability to make better discoveries, is, that these discoveries *have been actually made by the Bible*, and have become so

familiar, and, being once revealed, carry so clear a conviction to the reason of man, that, in the pride and forgetfulness of their hearts, they think them so easy as to be quite within the reach of their own efforts, had they not been so assisted. For, as Mr. Locke truly observes, “when truths are once known to us, though by tradition, we are apt to be favourable to our own parts, and ascribe to our own understanding the discovery of what, in reality, we borrowed from others ; or, at least, finding we can prove what at first we learned from others, we are forward to conclude it is an obvious truth, which, if we had sought, we could not have missed. Many are beholden to revelation who do not acknowledge it. It is no diminishing to revelation, that reason gives its suffrage too to the truths revelation has discovered : but it is our mistake to think, that because reason confirms them to us, we had the first certain knowledge of them from thence, and in that clear evidence we now possess them.”—The answer then to your question is, that if we had had no revelation from God, we should never have heard so much boasting of the strength of *reason* in man.

Y. But if the first and fundamental truths of religion were known in the early ages of the world, is it not a proof also of the weakness of man’s reason, that he fell into so many and such ridiculous errors on religious subjects?

T. It is both a proof of the wickedness of his *heart*, and the weakness of his *reason*, and also of the necessity of a new and WRITTEN revelation being introduced, to restore, enlarge, and perpetuate religious knowledge: for the truth being once lost, no power of human reason was ever able to restore it ; the whole world, both wise and barbarous nations, had sunk into the grossest igno-

rance at the time of the advent of our Lord ; and those parts of the world into which the light of our religion has not yet entered, even where civilization and learning exist, are in the same condition to this day.

Y. Be pleased to give me some instances of this.

T. It is not necessary to state particularly, what every one knows to be the fact, that the body of the people were in all nations grossly idolatrous and superstitious, ignorant of God and of moral distinctions, and crediting the most absurd fables, both as to the gods, and a future life. But the charge of great ignorance and error lies also against the wisest and most cultivated minds in the pagan world; for,

1. Though the belief of one Supreme Being has been found in many parts of the world, yet the notion of subordinate deities, the immediate dispensers of good and evil to men, and the objects of their fear and worship, has almost equally obtained ; and this, of necessity, destroyed or greatly counteracted the moral influence of that just opinion.

2. The modern idolatry of Hindostan, which in principle differs nothing from that of the ancient world, affords a striking comment upon this point, and indeed is of great importance in enabling us to conceive justly of the true character and practical effects of idolatry in all ages. One Supreme Being is acknowledged by the Hindoos ; but they never worship him, nor think that he concerns himself with human affairs at all. "This being," says Moore, "is called Brahm, one eternal mind, the self-existing, incomprehensible Spirit. To him, however, the Hindoos erect no altars. The objects of their adoration commence with the triad, *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, and *Seva*, which repre-

sent the almighty powers of *creation, preservation, and destruction.*"

3. The learned among the classic heathen, it is true, occasionally speak nobly concerning God and his attributes ; but at the same time they were led by their own imaginations and reasonings to conclusions which neutralize the effect of their sublimer conceptions, and often contradict them. The eternity of matter, for instance, was held by the Greek and Roman philosophers, and by their preceptors, the oriental schools, who thought it absolutely impossible that any thing should be produced from nothing,—thus destroying the notion of creation in its proper sense, and of a Supreme Creator.

In like manner, though occasionally we find many excellent things said of the Providence of God, all these were weakened or destroyed by other opinions. The Epicurean sect denied the doctrine, and laid it down as a maxim, "that what was blessed and immortal gave neither any trouble to itself nor to others ;" a notion which exactly agrees with the system of the modern Hindoos. The Stoicks contended for a Providence ; but in their creed it was counteracted by the doctrine of an absolute necessity, or fate, to which God and matter, or the universe, which consists, as they thought, of both, was immutably subject ; and where they allow it, they confine the care of the gods to great affairs only.

Another great principle of religion is the doctrine of a future state of reward and punishment ; and though in some form it is recognised in pagan systems, and the traditions of the primitive ages may be traced in their extravagant perversions and fables, its evidence was either greatly diminished, or it was mixed up with notions entirely subver-

sive of the moral effect which it was originally intended to produce.

The doctrine of Aristotle and the Peripatetics gives no countenance to the opinion of the soul's immortality, or even of its existence after death. Democritus and his followers taught, that the soul is material and mortal;—Heraclitus, that when the soul is purified from moist vapours, it returns into the soul of the universe; if not, it perishes;—Epicurus and his followers, that “when death is, we are not.” The leading men among the Romans, when philosophy was introduced among them, followed the various Greek sects. Cicero doubted. Pliny declares that the soul and body have no more sense after death than before we were born; Cæsar, “that beyond death there is neither place for care or joy.” The poets, it is true, spoke of a future state of rewards and punishments; they had the joys of Elysium, and the tortures of Tartarus; but both philosophers and poets regarded them as vulgar fables.

Thus you see, that “the world by wisdom knew not God;” and that the very first principles of religion were, for ages, either denied or corrupted by the most fatal errors.

Y. But as I have heard much of *heathen virtue*, I suppose that the *morals* of Gentile nations were better than their opinions?

T. This also is an error. The facts mentioned in their own histories, and by their own satirists and poets, show that morals were universally corrupted, to an extent not known among the worst Christian nations, and that the descriptions of the state of the heathen world in the New Testament, and especially in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, contain no exaggerations.

1. The slight regard paid to the life of man in

all heathen countries, cannot have escaped the notice of reflecting minds. Among the Romans, men were murdered in their very pastimes, by being made to fight with wild beasts and with each other; and though this was sometimes condemned, yet the passion for blood increased, and no war ever caused so great a slaughter as did the gladiatorial combats. They were at first confined to the funerals of great persons. The first show of this kind exhibited in Rome by the Bruti, on the death of their father, consisted of three couples; but afterwards the number greatly increased. Julius Cæsar presented 300 pairs of gladiators; and the Emperor Trajan, 10,000 of them, for the *entertainment* of the people. Sometimes these horrid exhibitions, when the practice had attained its height, deprived Europe of 20,000 lives in one month.

2. This is further illustrated by the treatment of slaves, which composed so large a portion of the population of ancient states. They knew and acknowledged the evil of murder, and had laws for its punishment; but to this despised class of human beings they did not extend the rule; nor was killing them accounted murder, any more than the killing of a beast. The master had absolute power of life, or death, or torture; and their lives were therefore sacrificed in the most wanton manner. The youth of Sparta made it their pastime frequently to lie in ambush by night for the slaves, and sally out with daggers upon every Helot who came near them, and murder him in cold blood. It was the custom for Vadius Pollio, a Roman, when his slaves had committed a fault, sometimes a very trifling one, to order them to be thrown into his fish-ponds, to feed his lampreys. It was the *constant custom*, as we learn from

Tacitus, when a master was murdered in his own house, to put all the slaves to death indiscriminately.

3. In many heathen nations it was allowed to strangle, or drown, or expose INFANTS, especially if sickly or deformed ; and that which in Christian states is considered as the most atrocious of crimes, was, by the most celebrated of ancient pagan nations, esteemed a wise and political expedient to rid the state of useless or troublesome members, and was even enjoined by some of their most celebrated sages and legislators. The same practice continues to this day in a most affecting extent, not only among uncivilized pagans, but among the Hindoos and the Chinese.

4. As far as the authority of their moral teachers went, a full scope was given for the indulgence of hatred, malice, and insatiate revenge. One of the qualities of the *good man* described by Cicero is, that he hurts no one, except he be injured himself ; and he declares as to himself, “ I will revenge all injuries, according as I am provoked by any.” And Aristotle speaks of meekness as a defect, because the meek man will not avenge himself ; and of revenge, as “ a more *manly* thing.”

5. To those vices which are connected with the pursuit of sinful pleasure, lawgivers, statesmen, philosophers, and moralists gave the sanction of their *opinions* and their *practice* ; which foul blot of ancient heathenism continues, to this day, to mark the morals of pagan countries.

6. In most civilized states, the very existence of society and the natural selfishness of man led to the preservation of the ancient laws against THEFT and RAPINE, and to the due execution of the statutes made against them ; but, in this also, we see the same disposition to corrupt the original

prohibition. It was not extended to strangers, or to foreign countries ; nor was it generally interpreted to reach to any thing more than flagrant acts of violence. Usury, extortion, and fraud, were rather regarded as laudable acts than as injurious to character. Throughout India, there is said to be scarcely such a thing as common honesty.

7. **DECEIT AND FALSEHOOD** have been the character of all pagan nations, and continue so to be to this day. This is the character of the Chinese as given by the best authorities ; and of the Hindoos it is stated, by the most respectable Europeans, not merely by Missionaries, but by those who have long held official, civil, and judicial situations among them, that their disregard of truth is uniform and systematic. When discovered, it causes no surprise in the one party, or humiliation in the other. Even when they have truth to tell, they seldom fail to bolster it up with some appended falsehoods. "It is the business of all," says Sir John Shore, "from the Ryot to the Dewan, to conceal and deceive. The simplest matters of fact are designedly covered with a veil, which no human understanding can penetrate." The prevalence of perjury is so universal, as to involve the Judges in extreme perplexity.

8. The horrible practice of offering **HUMAN SACRIFICES** prevailed throughout every region of the heathen world, to a degree which is almost incredible ; and it still prevails in many populous countries, where Christianity has not yet been made known. There are incontestable proofs of its having subsisted among the Egyptians, the Syrians, the Persians, the Phenicians, and all the various nations of the East. It was one of the crying sins of the Canaanites. The contagion

spread over every part of Asia, Africa, and Europe. The Greeks and Romans, though less involved in this guilt than many other nations, were not altogether untainted with it. On great and extraordinary occasions, they had recourse to what was esteemed the most efficacious and most meritorious sacrifice that could be offered to the gods, the effusion of human blood. But among more barbarous nations, this practice took a firmer root. The Scythians and Thracians, the Gauls and the Germans, were strongly addicted to it ; and our own island under the gloomy and ferocious despotism of the Druids, was polluted with the religious murder of its inhabitants. In the semi-civilized kingdoms on the western side of Africa, as Dahomy, Ashantee, and others, many thousands fall every year victims to superstition. In America, Montezuma offered 20,000 victims yearly to the sun ; and modern navigators have found the practice throughout the whole extent of the vast Pacific Ocean. As for India, the cries of its abominable and cruel superstitions have been sounded repeatedly in the ears of the British public and its Legislature ; and, including infants and widows, not fewer than 10,000 lives fall a sacrifice to idolatry in our own eastern dominions yearly !

9. This immoral tendency of their religion was confirmed and perfected by the very character and actions of their gods, whose names were perpetually in their mouths ; and whose murderous or obscene exploits, whose villanies and chicaneries, whose hatreds and strifes, were the subjects of their popular legends ; which made up, in fact, the only theology, if so it may be called, of the body of the people.

This sad picture of heathen morals and misery

must surely convince you that there was a most pressing *necessity* for a merciful interposition on the part of God, to enlighten this darkness, and to teach men *the truth* as to himself, and all those great principles on which human happiness and salvation depend.

Y. I do indeed see the value and necessity of a *written* and *authorized* revelation from God, and now wait for your next step in this important argument.

CHAPTER III.

THE EVIDENCE BY WHICH A REVELATION MAY BE SATISFACTORILY PROVED TO BE DIVINE.

T. You acknowledge such a revelation from God, as should contain explicit information on the subjects on which mankind had most erred, to have been necessary ; and you very properly expect that a religious system which makes so lofty a claim should be supported by adequate evidence : let me then ask whether you think it possible for God to reveal truth to man.

Y. To deny that, would be the greatest absurdity ; for as he made us *capable* of knowledge, he must be able to *communicate* knowledge to us in various ways,—by sensible appearances,—by voices,—by angels,—or by his secret and invisible illumination of the mind of man ; thus introducing ideas into the understanding, which it could not, by its own efforts, have acquired.

T. Right ; but now suppose any man to profess

that God had thus spoken to him by a voice, or to have sent an angel to him with a message, or to have illuminated his mind in the way just described ; would you admit the teaching and writing of such a man to be of divine authority, on his own declaration only ?

Y. Certainly not. If he were even a *good* man, I should still think that he might possibly have been *deceived* in whole or in part.

T. How then would you require him to prove that he had received such a revelation from God ?

Y. Indeed it is difficult to conceive how any man, though he might truly have received such a communication, could convince any other of it. He might make such a *profession* with earnestness ; he might appeal to his *good character* ; he might *reason* on the doctrine to prove it *rational* and *important* ; but none of these could command the entire credence of mankind, or give his doctrine *authority*.

T. Your remarks are just ; and, therefore, if such a revelation were intended to be a public benefit to mankind, and he who has received it was to be considered in the light of a divine messenger, we must suppose that Almighty God would in some way *accredit* him to others in that character, by enabling him to perform *some work* evidently above mere human power to effect, and which therefore must appear to be wrought by God himself by his instrumentality, as a *sign* of his commission.

Y. This seems to be the only means by which he could obtain credit ; and **MIRACLES** are, therefore, I suppose, urged by believers in the Bible as *signs* of this description.

T. They are so ; but that you may fully perceive the force of the argument which we build upon

them, I must ask you to tell me what a *miracle* is.

Y. A miracle is a *wonder*, a *prodigy*, or *extraordinary event*.

T. This is a definition of a miracle merely in the *popular* sense ; but in the sense in which we use the term in *theology*, we must be more precise in our definition. A miracle is an effect or event contrary to the established constitution or course of things, or a sensible suspension or controlment of, or deviation from, the known laws of nature, wrought either by the immediate act, or by the concurrence, or by the permission of God, for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority of some particular person.

Y. What end does this definition serve ?

T. It shows you, that we take the fairest ground with unbelievers in this question :—that we do not think every *strange event* a miracle ; nor what uninstructed men, from their ignorance of the laws of nature, medicinal power, the power of imagination over the bodily frame, or mechanical skill and contrivances, or the science of chemistry, might consider *miraculous* ; but acknowledge that event only to be miraculous, which manifestly exceeds the extent of *human power*, as measured by those limits of its exertion, which uniform *experience* has defined,—which, as it overrules the established *laws of nature*, must argue the agency of a *divine control*,—and which is so connected with the *promulgation* of a professed revelation as clearly to be *designed* to authenticate it.

Y. The question cannot be more fairly stated ; but now I wish to hear the argument you form

from the supposed case of the performance of *such* a miracle.

T. The argument is, that as the known and established course of nature has been fixed by him who is the Creator and Preserver of all things, it can never be violated, departed from, or controlled, but either immediately by himself, or mediately by other beings at his command, and by his assistance, or permission ; for if this be not allowed, we must deny that God governs all things. Every real miracle, therefore, is a work of God, done by his permission, and with his concurrence.

Y. But how do you *connect* such miracles with the *authority* of the teachers of a professed revelation ?

T. In the following manner :—

When such unequivocal miracles as those we have pointed out occur only at the time when certain persons profess that they have a divine authority to teach and command mankind, this is a strong presumption, that the works are wrought by God in order to authenticate this pretension ; but when they are performed by those persons themselves, at their own volition, and for the express purpose of establishing their mission, inasmuch as such works are allowed to be real miracles, which no power but that of God can effect, it is then clear that God is with them, and that his co-operation is an authenticating and visible seal upon their commission.

Y. This is satisfactory ; but it still remains for you to show, that such miracles have been actually wrought by the agents employed by God to communicate to men the revelations of the Scriptures.

T. This might be done at great length, but it

will be sufficient to examine a few of the miracles of *Moses* and of *Christ*; for if their divine commission be thus proved, all the rest follows.

Y. This of course.

T. Well, then, to begin with *Moses*,—

1. The **ROD** cast from the hand of *Moses* became a serpent. Here the *subject* was well known; it was a rod, a branch separated from a tree; and it was obviously contrary to the known and established course of nature, that it should undergo so signal a transformation. If the fact can be proved, the *miracle* must therefore follow.

2. The plague of **DARKNESS**. Two circumstances are to be noted in the relation given of this event in Exodus x. It continued three days; and it afflicted the *Egyptians* only, for “all the children of *Israel* had light in their dwellings.” The fact here mentioned was of the most public kind; and had it not taken place, every *Egyptian* and every *Israelite* could have contradicted the account. The phenomenon was not produced by an eclipse of the sun, for no eclipse of that luminary can endure so long; and to what but to a supernatural cause could the distinction made between the *Israelites* and the *Egyptians* be attributed, when they inhabited a portion of the same country, and when their neighbourhoods were immediately adjoining? Here then are the characters of a true miracle. The established course of natural causes and effects is interrupted by an operation upon that mighty element, the atmosphere. That it was not a casual irregularity in nature, is made apparent from the effect following the volition of a man acting in the name of the Lord of Nature, and from its being restrained by that to a certain part of the same country.—“*Moses stretched out his hand,*” and the darkness

prevailed every where but in the dwellings of his own people. The fact being allowed, the *miracle*, of necessity, follows.

3. The miracle of dividing the waters of the RED SEA. In this event we observe, as in the others, circumstances which exclude all possibility of mistake or collusion. The subject of the miracle is the sea ; the witnesses of it the host of Israel, who passed through on foot, and the Egyptian nation, who lost their king and his whole army. The miraculous characters of the event are,—the waters are divided, and stand up on each side ;—the instrument is a strong east wind, which begins its operation upon the waters, at the stretching out of the hand of Moses, and ceases at the same signal, and that at the precise moment when the return of the waters would be most fatal to the Egyptian pursuing army. The miraculous character of this event is, therefore, most strongly marked. An expanse of water, and that water a sea of from nine to twelve miles broad, known to be exceedingly subject to agitations, is divided, and a wall of water is formed on each hand, affording a passage on dry land for the Israelites. The phenomenon occurs, too, just as the Egyptian host are on the point of overtaking the fugitives ; and ceases at the moment when the latter reach the opposite shore in safety, and when their enemies are in the midst of the passage, in the only position in which the closing of the wall of waters on each side could ensure the entire destruction of so large a force !

4. The falling of the MANNA in the wilderness for forty years, is another unquestionable miracle, and one in which there could be neither mistake on the part of those who were sustained by it, nor fraud on the part of Moses. That this event

was not produced by the ordinary course of nature, is rendered certain by the fact, that the same wilderness has been travelled by individuals, and by large bodies of men, from the earliest ages to the present, but no such supply of food was ever met with, except on this occasion. And its miraculous character is further marked by the following circumstances: — That it fell but six days in the week: that it fell in such prodigious quantities, as sustained three millions of souls: that there fell a double quantity every Friday, to serve the Israelites for the next day, which was their Sabbath: that what was gathered on the first five days of the week stank and bred worms, if kept above one day; but that which was gathered on Friday kept sweet for two days: and that it continued falling while the Israelites remained in the wilderness, but ceased as soon as they came out of it, and got corn to eat in the land of Canaan. Let these very extraordinary particulars be considered, and they at once confirm the fact, whilst they unequivocally establish the miracle. No people could be deceived in these circumstances; no person could persuade them of their truth, if they had not occurred; and the whole was so clearly out of the regular course of nature, as to mark unequivocally the interposition of God.

To the majority of the numerous miracles recorded in the Old Testament, the same remarks apply, and upon them the same miraculous characters are as indubitably impressed. If we proceed to those of Christ, the evidence becomes, if possible, more indubitable. They were clearly above the power either of human agency or natural causes. It would be trifling to examine instances so well known in their circumstances; for the

slightest recollection of the feeding of the multitudes in the desert,—the healing of the paralytic,—the instant cure of the withered hand in the synagogue, near Jesusalem,—the raising from the dead the daughter of Jairus, the widow's son, and Lazarus,—and many other instances of miraculous power,—will be sufficient to convince any ingenuous mind, that all the characters of real miracles meet in them. The great miracle, the resurrection of our Lord himself from the dead, so often appealed to by the first teachers of his religion, crowns the whole.

Y. I now most clearly perceive, that if these facts can be established to have actually taken place, they must be allowed to have been wrought by a *divine power*; and, by the *circumstances* of their performance, or occurrence, to attest both Moses and Christ as *commissioned* by the Author of nature himself. But is not evidence from PROPHECY also relied on in proof of the divine authority of the Scriptures?

T. It is; and with reason.

Y. But tell me what you understand by prophecy?

T. Your question is important; for we do not understand by prophecy an ingenious *anticipation* of future events, which may sometimes be realized; nor *dark* and *equivocal general predictions*, which may often have a plausible application to different events; nor the *wise conjectures of observant men*, founded upon *experience*. We here, as in the case of miracles, take open ground with our opponents, and appeal to prophecy only as it bears the following characters:—1. That it shall have been delivered *before* the event said to be a fulfilment of it; 2. That it shall have a *particular*, and not a *general*, agreement with that event; 3. That

the event shall be such as no *human sagacity* or *foresight* could possibly *conjecture* and *foretel*; and, 4. That these predictions shall be *connected* with those who profess to give revelations from God to mankind, in the same manner as in the case of miracles.

Y. This brings the matter to an easy issue; but in what way is the fulfilment of prophecy a proof of a divine commission in him who utters it?

T. In the following:—

When, for instance, the events are distant many years or ages from the uttering of the prediction itself, depending on causes not so much as existing when the prophecy was spoken and recorded, and likewise upon various circumstances and a long arbitrary series of things, and the fluctuating uncertainties of human volitions; and especially when they depend not at all upon any external circumstances, nor upon any created being, but arise merely from the counsels and appointment of God himself;—such events can be foreknown only by that Being, one of whose attributes is omniscience, and can be foretold by him only to whom the “Father of lights” shall reveal them; so that whoever is manifestly endued with that predictive power, must, in that instance, speak and act by divine inspiration, and what he pronounces of that kind must be received as the word of God; nothing more being necessary to assure us of this, than credible testimony that such predictions were uttered before the event, and conclusive evidence that the records which contain them are of the antiquity to which they pretend.

Y. Can you give any instances of this kind of prophecy, and its fulfilment?

T. The instances which the Scriptures supply are very numerous; but a few will convince you

of the irresistible force of their claim to divine inspiration.

1. We take, first, the celebrated prediction of Jacob before his death : “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until SHILOH come,” &c.

The word SHILOH signifies, “He who is to be sent,” or “The peace-maker :” in either sense, the application of it to that great Person to whom all the patriarchs looked forward, and all the prophets gave witness, is obvious. Before a certain *event*, a certain *person* was to come, to whom the people should be gathered : the event has certainly arrived, but who is the person ? The application of the prophecy to Messiah is not an invention of Christians. The ancient Jews, as appears from their commentators, so understood it ; and the modern ones are unable to refute the evidence drawn from it in favour of the claims of our Lord. That it is a prediction, is proved from its form, and the circumstances under which it was delivered ; that it has received a singular accomplishment in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, is also certain ; and it is equally certain, that no individual beside can be produced, in whom it has been in any sense whatever accomplished. Judah, *as a tribe*, remained till after the advent of Jesus Christ, which cannot be said of the long-dispersed ten tribes, and scarcely of Benjamin, which was merged in the tribe of Judah. Till our Lord came, and had accomplished his work on earth, the tribe of Judah continued. This is matter of unquestionable historic fact. In a short time afterwards it was dispersed, and mingled with the common mass of Jews of all tribes and countries : this is equally unquestionable. Now again we ask, Could either human foresight determine this,

or is the application of the event to the prophecy fanciful? The prediction was uttered in the very infancy of the state of Israel, by the father of the fathers of the tribes of that people. Ages passed away; the mightiest empires were annihilated; ten of the chosen tribes themselves were utterly dispersed into unknown countries; another became so insignificant as to lose its designation; one only remained, which imposed its very name upon the nation at large, the object of public observation until the Messiah came, and that tribe was JUDAH, the tribe spoken of in the prediction, and it remained as it were only to make the fulfilment manifest, and was then confounded with the relics of the rest. What prescience of countless contingencies, occurring in the intervening ages, does this imply!—a prescience truly which can only belong to God.

2. The apostacies and idolatries of his people were foretold by Moses before his death. “I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you, and evil will befall you in the latter days;” (Deut. xxxi. 29;) and he accordingly prophetically declares their punishment.

Let us look into the detail of these threatened punishments. Besides the ordinary inflictions of failing harvests, and severe diseases, in their own country, they were, according to the prophecies of Moses, (Deut. xxviii.,) to be “scattered among all people, from the one end of the earth even to the other.” And where is the trading nation in which they are not, in Asia, Africa, and Europe? Many are even to be found in the West Indies, and in the commercial parts of America. Who could foresee this but God; especially when their singular preservation as a distinct people, a soli-

tary instance in the history of nations, is also implied? They were to find "*no ease*" among these nations; and the almost constant and long-continued persecutions, robberies, and murder of Jews, not only in ancient nations, but especially among Christian nations of the middle ages, and in the Mahometan States to this day, are in wonderful accomplishment of this. They were to be "*a proverb and a by-word among all nations,*" which has been in every place fulfilled, but was surely above human intelligence to foresee. It was added, "*The stranger that is within thee shall get above thee very high, and thou shalt come very low.*" For a comment on this, let the conduct of the "*stranger,*" the Turk, and others, who inhabit Palestine, towards the Jews who remain there, be recollected: the one party is indeed "*very high,*" and the other "*very low.*" Other parts of this singular chapter present equally striking predictions, uttered more than three thousand years ago, and since remarkably accomplished; but there are some passages in it, which refer in terms so particular to a then distant event,—the utter subversion of their polity and nation by the Romans,—as to demonstrate in the most unequivocal manner the prescience of Him to whom all events, the most contingent, minute, and distant, are known with absolute certainty. That the Romans are intended, in ver. 49, by the nation brought from "*the end of the earth,*" distinguished by their well-known ensign "*the eagle,*" and by their fierce and cruel disposition, is exceedingly probable; and it is remarkable, that the account which Moses gives of the horrors of the "*siege*" of which he speaks, is exactly paralleled by those well-known passages in Josephus, in which he describes the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman

army. The last verse of the chapter seems indeed to fix the reference of the foregoing passages to the final destruction of the nation by the Romans, and at the same time contains a prediction, the accomplishment of which cannot possibly be ascribed to accident. “And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, by the way whereof I spake unto thee, Thou shalt see it no more again: and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you.” On this Dr. Hales remarks, on the authority of their own national historian, Josephus, “Of the captives taken at the siege of Jerusalem, above seventeen years of age, some were sent to Egypt in chains; the greater part were distributed through the provinces, to be destroyed in the theatres, by the sword, and by wild beasts; the rest, under seventeen, were sold for slaves, and that for a trifling sum, on account of the numbers to be sold, and the scarcity of buyers; so that at length the prophecy of Moses was fulfilled,—‘and no man shall buy.’ The part that were reserved to grace the triumph of Vespasian were probably transported to Italy in ‘ships,’ or by sea, to avoid a prodigious land-journey thither through Asia and Greece,—a circumstance which distinguished this invasion and captivity from the preceding by the Assyrians and Babylonians. In the ensuing rebellion, a part of the captives ‘were sent by sea to Egypt,’ and several of the ships were wrecked on the coast.”

Thus, at a distance of fifteen centuries, were these contingent circumstances accurately recorded by the prophetic spirit of Moses,—the taking of innumerable Jews captive,—their transport to Egypt,—their being sold till the markets for slaves were glutted, and no more buyers were found,—

and embarked on board vessels, either to grace the triumph of their conqueror, or to find a market in different maritime ports. Is it possible that these numerous and minute circumstances can be referred to either happy conjectures or human foresight?

3. The destruction of many ancient cities was foretold by the Prophets, and has been strikingly verified. As to Babylon, even when it was the most potent city of the world, and the head of the most formidable empire, Isaiah predicts its capture by Cyrus, (mentioning him by name more than one hundred years before he was born,) and its utter destruction. Now the proof of the truth of this prophecy remains *to this day*. In Bishop Newton's *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, which I recommend to your perusal, you will find this part of prophetic Scripture strikingly illustrated. And still further proofs of the wonderfully exact accomplishment of those prophecies may be seen in a highly interesting *Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon*, by Claudius J. Rich, published in 1815. Immense ruins were visited by him near the supposed site of ancient Babylon, which probably are, though the matter cannot be certainly ascertained, the remains of that astonishing city, now indeed swept with the "besom of destruction." He tells us too, that the neighbourhood is to the present a habitation only for birds and beasts of prey; that the dens of lions, with their slaughtered victims, are to be seen in many places; and that most of the cavities are occupied with bats and owls. It is therefore impossible to reflect without awe upon the passage of Isaiah, written during the prosperity of Babylon, wherein he says, "The wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls

shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there." The present ruins of that city also demonstrate, that the course of the Euphrates has been changed, probably in consequence of the channel formed by Cyrus ; and the yielding nature of the soil demonstrates that such an operation could have been performed by a large army with great facility and dispatch.

The ruins examined by Mr. Rich bear testimony to the immense extent of the city as described by ancient authors. Vast masses of masonry, of both burnt and unburnt bricks and bitumen, were observed in various excavations in these huge *mountains* of ruins, which are separated from each other by several miles. One is called by the Arabs, *Birs Nimroud* ; another the *Kasr*, or Palace ; and a third, which some have thought to be the ruins of the Tower of Belus, is called by the natives *Mugelibè, overturned*, which expressive term is also sometimes applied to the mounds of the Kasr.

4. Daniel distinctly predicts the overthrow, in succession, of the *four great empires* of antiquity, the *Babylonian*, the *Persian*, the *Grecian*, and the *Roman* ; all which has taken place : but neither the *rise* of the three latter, nor their *fall*, could have been foreseen by man.

5. But the most numerous prophecies relate to **MESSIAH**, the great end and object of the prophetic dispensation. Of these not a solitary instance, or two, of an equivocal kind, and expressed only in figurative or symbolic language, are to be adduced ; but upwards of *one hundred* predictions, generally of very clear and explicit meaning, and each referring to some different circumstance connected with the appearing of Christ, his person, history, and his ministry, have been selected by Divines ;—

exclusive of typical and allusive predictions, and those which in an ultimate and remote sense are believed to terminate in him. The history of Jesus answers to these predictions, and exhibits their exact accomplishment. The Messiah was to be of the seed of David,—born in Bethlehem, —born of a virgin,—an incarnation of Deity, “God with us,”—an eminent but unsuccessful teacher ;—he was to open the eyes of the blind, heal the lame and sick, and raise the dead ;—he was to be despised and rejected by his own countrymen, arraigned on false charges, denied justice, and condemned to a violent death ;—he was to rise from the dead, ascend to the right hand of God, and there being invested with power and authority, he was to punish his enemies, and establish his own spiritual kingdom, which shall never end. We do not enter into more minute predictions, for the argument is irresistible when founded on these alone ; and we may assert that no man, or number of men, could possibly have made such conjectures. Considered in themselves, this is impossible. What rational man, or number of rational men, could now be found to hazard a conjecture that an incarnation of Deity would occur in any given place and time,—that this Divine Person should teach wisdom, work miracles, be unjustly put to death, rise again, and establish his religion ? These are thoughts which never enter into the minds of men, because they are suggested by no experience, and by no probability arising out of the usual course of human affairs : and yet if the Prophets were not inspired, it would have been as impossible for them to have conceived such expectations, as for us ; and indeed much more so, seeing we are now familiar with a religion which asserts that such events

have once occurred. If then such events lay beyond not only human foresight, but even human thought, they can only be referred to inspiration. But the case does not close here. How shall we account, in the next place, for these circumstances all having met, strange as they are, in one person, and in one only among all the millions of men who have been born of woman,—and that person Jesus of Nazareth? He was of the house and lineage of David,—he was born, and that by a singular event, in Bethlehem,—he professed to be “God with us,” and wrought miracles to substantiate his claim. At his word or touch, the “eyes of the blind were opened,” “the lame leaped as a hart,” the dumb spake, the sick were healed, and the dead lived, as the Prophets had foretold. Of the *wisdom* of his teaching, his recorded discourses bear witness. His *rejection* and unjust *death* by his countrymen are matters of historic fact; his *resurrection* and *ascension* stand upon the lofty evidences which have been already adduced; the destruction of the Jewish nation, according to his own predictions, followed as the proof of the terror of his offended majesty; and his “kingdom” among men continues to this day. There is no possible means of evading the evidence of the fulfilment of these predictions in the person of our Lord.

To all these predictions the words of a modern writer are applicable: “Let now the infidel, or the sceptical reader, meditate thoroughly and soberly upon these predictions. The priority of the records to the events admits of no question. The completion is obvious to every competent inquirer. Here then are facts. We are called upon to account for those facts on rational and adequate principles. Is human foresight equal to the task? Enthusiasm? Conjecture? Chance?

Political contrivance? If none of these, neither any other principle that may be devised by man's sagacity, can account for the facts; then true philosophy as well as true religion will ascribe them to the inspiration of the Almighty. Every effect must have a cause."

Y. This is evidence not to be controverted; but how shall I know that these *miraculous* works did in reality take place, and that these *prophecies* were uttered and recorded before the *events* which they foretel?

T. This is the third step in our demonstration; and on this subject you shall receive satisfactory information.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ANTIQUITY, GENUINENESS, AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE BOOKS OF SCRIPTURE.

Y. At what period did *Moses* become the legislator of the Jewish nation, and *Christ* appear in the world?

T. Moses gave his laws about 1600 years before *Christ*, according to the common chronology, which fixes the birth of our Lord upwards of eighteen centuries ago.

Y. Is there any testimony of ancient *pagan writers*, as to the *existence* and *antiquity* of these distinguished persons?

T. Yes; for though some infidel writers have carried their folly so far as to question their exist-

ence, we have the testimony of numerous pagan writers, as well as uninterrupted tradition, to confirm it.

Y. Have the kindness to give me some instances.

T. To the existence of the founders of the Jewish and Christian religion, and the respective antiquity ascribed to them in the Scriptures, many ancient writers give ample testimony ; who, being themselves neither of the Jewish nor Christian religion, cannot be suspected of having had any design to furnish evidence of the truth of either. **MANETHO**, **CEREMON**, **APOLLONIUS**, and **LYSIMACHUS**, besides some other ancient Egyptians whose histories are now lost, are quoted by Josephus, as extant in his days ; and passages are collected from them, in which they agree that Moses was the leader of the Jews when they departed from Egypt, and the founder of their laws. **STRABO**, who flourished in the century before Christ, gives an account of the law of Moses, as forbidding images, and limiting divine worship to One Invisible and Universal Being. **JUSTIN**, a Roman historian, in his 36th book, devotes a chapter to an account of the origin of the Jews ; represents them as sprung from ten sons of Israel, and speaks of Moses as the commander of the Jews, who went out of Egypt, of the institution of the Sabbath, and the Priesthood of Aaron. **PLINY** speaks of Moses, as giving rise to a sect of magicians, probably with reference to his contest with the magicians of Egypt. **TACITUS** says, “ Moses gave a new form of worship to the Jews, and a system of religious ceremonies, the reverse of every thing known to any other age or country.” **JUVENAL**, in his 14th Satire, mentions Moses as the author of a volume, which was preserved with

great care among the Jews, by which the worship of images and eating swine's flesh were forbidden ; and circumcision, and the observation of the Sabbath, strictly enjoined. LONGINUS cites Moses as the lawgiver of the Jews, and praises the sublimity of his style in the account he gives of the creation.—As to CHRIST, it is only necessary to give the testimony of two historians, whose antiquity no one ever thought of disputing. Suetonius mentions him by name, and says that Claudius expelled from Rome those who adhered to his cause. TACITUS records the progress which the Christian religion had made, and the violent death its founder had suffered ; that he flourished under the reign of Tiberius ; that Pilate was then Procurator of Judea ; and that the original author of this profession was Christ. Thus not only the real existence of the founder of Christianity, but the period in which he lived, is exactly ascertained by writings the genuineness of which has never been doubted.

Y. Proceed now to show me on what ground I am to admit the professed *antiquity* of the sacred Scriptures, which appears also to be an important point.

T. It is : for if the writings in question were composed at, or very near, the time in which the miraculous acts recorded in them were performed, then the evidence of those events having occurred is rendered the stronger, for, in that case, they were written at the time when many were living who might have contradicted the narration, if false ; and the improbability is also greater, that, in the very age and place when and where those events are said to have been performed, any writer would have dared to run the hazard of prompt, certain, and disgraceful detection. It is equally important

in the evidence from prophecy ; for if the predictions were recorded long before the events which accomplished them took place, then the only question which remains is, whether the accomplishment actually occurred ; for then the evidence becomes irresistible.

Y. I perceive the importance of this inquiry : what then can be adduced ?

T. With respect to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, the *language* in which they are written is a strong proof of their antiquity. The Hebrew ceased to be spoken as a living language soon after the Babylonish captivity, and the learned agree that there was no grammar made for the Hebrew till many ages after. The difficulty of a forgery at any period after the time of that captivity is therefore apparent. Of these books too there was a Greek translation, commonly called the Septuagint, made about two hundred and eighty-seven years before the Christian era, and laid up in the Alexandrian Library.

Josephus gives a catalogue of the Sacred Books among the Jews, in which he expressly mentions the five books of Moses, thirteen of the Prophets, four of Hymns and Moral Precepts ; and if, as many critics maintain, Ruth was added to Judges, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah to his prophecies, the number agrees with those of the Old Testament as it is received at the present day.

The Samaritans, who separated from the Jews many hundred years before the birth of Christ, have in their language a Pentateuch, in the main exactly agreeing with the Hebrew ; and the pagan writers before cited, with many others, speak of Moses not only as a lawgiver and a prince, but as the author of books esteemed sacred by the Jews.

Y. If the writings of Moses, then, are not

genuine, the forgery must have taken place at a very early period.

T. Yes ; but a few considerations will convince you, that at *any time* this was utterly impossible.

Y. This I shall be happy to see made plain.

T. It is done to my hand by the argument of a celebrated writer,* which I shall abridge, referring you to his work for the proof at large.

“ It is impossible that those books should have been received as his, if not written by him, because they speak of themselves as delivered by Moses, and kept in the ark from his time. (Deut. xxxi. 24—26.) A copy of this book was also to be left with the king. (Deut. xvii. 18.)

“ This book of the law thus speaks of itself, not only as a history or relation of what things were done, but as the standing and municipal law and statutes of the nation of the Jews, binding the king as well as the people. Now in whatever age after Moses this book may be supposed to have been forged, it was impossible that it could be received as truth, because it was not then to be found (as it professed to be) either in the ark, or with the king, or any where else ; for when first invented, every body must know that they had never heard of it before.

“ Could any man, now at this day, invent a book of statutes or Acts of Parliament for England, and make it pass upon the nation as the only book of statutes that ever they had known ? As impossible was it for the books of Moses (if they were invented in any age after Moses) to have been received for what they declare themselves to be, viz., the statutes and municipal law of the nation of the Jews ; and for any to have persuaded the Jews, that they had owned and acknowledged

* Leslie’s Short and Easy Method with the Deists.

these books all along, from the days of Moses to that day in which they were first invented ; that is, that they had owned them before they had ever so much as heard of them. Nay, more, the whole nation must, in an instant, forget their former laws and government, if they could receive these books as being their former laws. And they could not otherwise receive them, because they vouched themselves so to be. Let me ask the Deists but one short question : Was there ever a book of sham laws, which were not the laws of the nation, palmed upon any people, since the world began ? If not, with what face can they say this of the book of laws of the Jews ? Why will they say that of them, which they confess impossible in any nation, or among any people ?

“ But they must be yet more unreasonable. For the books of Moses have a further demonstration of their truth than even other law-books have ; for they not only contain the laws, but give an historical account of their institution, and the practice of them from that time :—as of the Passover, in memory of the death of the first-born in Egypt ; (Num. viii. 17, 18;) and that the same day, all the first-born of Israel, both of man and beast, were, by a perpetual law, dedicated to God ; and the Levites taken for all the first-born of the children of Israel. And besides these remembrances of particular actions and occurrences, there were other solemn institutions in memory of their deliverance out of Egypt, in the general, which included all the particulars ;—as the Sabbath ; their daily sacrifices and yearly expiation ; their new moons, and several feasts and fasts. So that there were yearly, monthly, weekly, daily, remembrances and recognitions of these things.

“ Now whenever it can be supposed that these

books of Moses were forged in some ages after Moses, it is impossible they could have been received as true, unless the forgers could have made the whole nation believe, that they had received these books from their fathers, had been instructed in them when they were children, and had taught them to their children ; moreover, that they had all been circumcised, and did circumcise their children in pursuance to what was commanded in these books ; that they had observed the yearly passover, the weekly sabbath, the new moons, and all these several feasts, fasts, and ceremonies, commanded in these books. But, was it possible to have persuaded a whole nation of men, that they had known and practised all these things, if they had not done it ? or, secondly, to have received a book for truth, which said they had practised them, and appealed to that practice ?

“ But now let us descend to the utmost degree of supposition, viz., that these things were practised before these books of Moses were forged ; and that those books did only impose upon the nation in making them believe, that they had kept these observances in memory of such and such things as were inserted in those books.

“ Well, then, let us proceed upon this supposition, (however groundless,) and now, will not the same impossibilities occur as in the former case ? For, first, this must suppose that the Jews kept all these observances in memory of nothing, or without knowing any thing of their original, or the reason why they kept them. Whereas these very observances did express the ground and reason of their being kept ; as the Passover, in memory of God’s passing over the children of the Israelites, in that night wherein he slew all the first-born of Egypt ; and so of the rest.

" But, secondly, let us suppose, contrary both to reason and matter of fact, that the Jews did not know any reason at all why they kept these observances ; yet was it possible to persuade them that they had kept these observances in memory of what they had never heard of before that day, whensoever you will suppose that these books of Moses were first forged ? For example : suppose I should now forge some romantic story, of strange things done a thousand years ago ; and, in confirmation of this, should endeavour to persuade the Christian world that they had all along, from that day to this, kept the first day of the week in memory of such a hero, an Apollonius, a Bar-cochebas, or a Mahomet ; and had all been baptized in his name ; and swore by his name, and upon that very book, (which I had then forged, and which they never saw before,) in their public judicatures ; that this book was their Gospel and Law, which they had ever since that time, these thousand years past, universally received and owned, and none other. I would ask any Deist, whether he thinks it possible that such a cheat could pass, or such a legend be received, as the Gospel of Christians ; and that they could be made to believe that they had never had any other Gospel ?

" Let me give one very familiar example more in this case. There is the Stonehenge in Salisbury Plain : every body knows it ; and yet none knows the reason why those great stones were set there, or by whom, or in memory of what.

" Now, suppose I should write a book to-morrow, and tell them, that these stones were set up by Hercules, Polyphebus, or Garagantua, in memory of such and such of their actions ; and for a further confirmation of this, should say in this book, that it was written at the time when such actions were

done, and by the very actors themselves, or eye-witnesses ; and that this book had been received as truth, and quoted by authors of the greatest reputation in all ages since ;— moreover, that this book was well known in England, and enjoined by Act of Parliament to be taught our children ; and that we did teach it to our children, and had been taught it ourselves when we were children. I ask any Deist, whether he thinks this could pass upon England ? and whether, if I, or any other, should insist upon it, we should not, instead of being believed, be sent to Bedlam ? ”

This able reasoning has never been refuted, nor can be ; and if the books of the law must have been written by Moses, it is as easy to prove that Moses himself could not in the nature of the thing have deceived the people by an imposture, and a pretence of miraculous attestations, in order, like some later lawgivers among the Heathens, to bring the people more willingly to submit to his institutions. The kind of miracles he gives as instances rendered this impossible. “ Suppose,” says the same writer, “ any man should pretend, that yesterday he divided the Thames, in presence of all the people of London, and carried the whole city, men, women, and children, over to Southwark, on dry land, the water standing like walls on both sides : I say, it is morally impossible that he could persuade the people of London, that this was true, when every man, woman, and child could contradict him, and say, that this was a notorious falsehood, for that they had not seen the Thames so divided, nor had they gone over on dry land.

“ As to Moses, I suppose it will be allowed me, that he could not have persuaded 600,000 men, that he had brought them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, fed them forty years, without bread,

by miraculous manna, and the other matters of fact recorded in his books, if they had not been true ; because every man's senses then alive must have contradicted it. And therefore he must have imposed upon all their senses, if he could have made them believe it, when it was false, and if no such things were done."

By these arguments, the genuineness and authenticity of the books of Moses are established ; and as to those of the Prophets, which, with some predictions in the writings of Moses, comprise the prophetic branch of the evidence of the divine authority of the revelations they contain,—it can be proved both from Jewish tradition ; the list of Josephus ; the Greek translation ; and from their being quoted by ancient writers, that they existed many ages before several of those events occurred.

The same author, from whom we have already quoted,* applied his celebrated Four Rules, for determining the truth of matters of fact in general, with equal force to the facts of the Gospel history, as to those contained in the Mosaic writings. The rules are, “ 1. That the matter of fact be such as that men's outward senses, their eyes and ears, may be judges of it. 2. That it be done publicly in the face of the world. 3. That not only public monuments be kept up in memory of it, but some outward actions be performed. 4. That such monuments, and such actions and observances, be instituted, and do commence from the time that the matter of fact was done.”

We have seen the manner in which these rules are applied to the books of Moses. The author thus applies them to the Gospel :—

“ I come now to show, that as in the matters of

* Leslie.

fact of Moses, so likewise all these four marks do meet in the matters of fact which are recorded in the Gospel of our blessed Saviour. And my work herein will be the shorter, because all that is said before of Moses and his books, is every way as applicable to Christ and his Gospel. His works and his miracles are there said to be done publicly in the face of the world ; as he argued with his accusers, ‘ I spake openly to the world, and in secret have I said nothing.’ (John xviii. 20.) It is told, Acts ii. 41, that three thousand at one time, and, Acts iv. 4, that above five thousand at another time, were converted upon conviction of what themselves had seen, what had been done publicly before their eyes, wherein it was impossible to have imposed upon them. Therefore here were the two first rules before-mentioned.

“ Then for the two second : baptism and the Lord’s supper were instituted as perpetual memorials of these things ; and they were not instituted in after-ages, but at the very time when these things were said to be done ; and have been observed without interruption, in all ages throughout the whole Christian world, down all the way from that time to this. And Christ himself did ordain Apostles and other Ministers of his Gospel, to preach and administer the sacraments ; and to govern his Church ; and that always, even unto the end of the world. (Matt. xviii. 20.) Accordingly, they have continued by regular succession to this day ; and, no doubt, ever shall, while the earth shall last. So that the Christian Clergy are as notorious a matter of fact, as the tribe of Levi among the Jews. And the Gospel is as much a law to the Christians, as the Book of Moses to the Jews : and it being part of the matters of fact related in the Gospel, that such an order of men were

appointed by Christ, and to continue to the end of the world ; consequently, if the Gospel was a fiction, and invented (as it must be) in some ages after Christ ; then, at that time when it was first invented, there could be no such order of clergy, as derived themselves from the institution of Christ ; which must give the lie to the Gospel, and demonstrate the whole to be false. And the matters of fact of Christ being pressed to be true, no otherwise than as there was at that time (whenever the Deists will suppose the Gospel to be forged) not only public sacraments of Christ's institution, but an order of clergy, likewise of his appointment, to administer them : and it being impossible there could be any such things before they were invented, it is as impossible that they should be received when invented. And therefore, by what was said above, it was as impossible to have imposed upon mankind in this matter, by inventing of it in after-ages, as at the time when those things were said to be done."

Y. This is indeed very convincing ; and on this point I am satisfied, that neither the writings of Moses, nor those of the Evangelists, could have been forged, and yet be received as true in any age.

T. Yet other proofs may be brought from the testimonies of adversaries and Heathens, to the truth of the history of the Evangelists.

Y. I will thank you to point them out.

T. No public contradiction of this history was ever put forth by the Jewish rulers to stop the progress of a hated religion, though they had every motive to contradict it. This silence is not unimportant evidence ; but the direct testimonies to the facts are numerous and important.

We have already quoted the testimonies of Tacitus and Suetonius to the existence of Jesus

Christ, the founder of the Christian religion, and to his crucifixion in the reign of Tiberius and during the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate, the time in which the Evangelists place that event. Other references to heathen authors, who incidentally allude to Christ, his religion and followers, might be given ; such as Martial, Juvenal, Epictetus, Trajan, the younger Pliny, Adrian, Apuleius, Lucian of Samosata, &c., some of whom also afford testimony to the destruction of Jerusalem, at the time and in the circumstances predicted by our Saviour, and to the antiquity and genuineness of the books of the New Testament. But, as it is well observed by the learned Lardner, in his "Collection of Jewish and Heathen Testimonies," " among all the testimonies to Christianity which we have met with in the first ages, none are more valuable and important than the testimonies of those learned philosophers who wrote against us,—Celsus in the second century, Porphyry and Hierocles in the third, and Julian in the fourth."

CELSUS wrote against Christianity not much above one hundred and thirty years after our Lord's ascension, and his books were answered by the celebrated ORIGEN. He was a most bitter enemy of Christianity, and produces many passages out of the Gospels. He represents Jesus to have lived a few years before. He mentions his being born of a virgin ; the angel's appearing to Joseph ; the star that appeared at his birth ; the wise men that came to worship him when an infant ; Herod's massacre of the children ; Joseph's fleeing with the child into Egypt by the admonition of an angel ; the Holy Ghost's descending on Jesus like a dove, when he was baptized by John ; and the voice from heaven declaring him to be " the Son of

God ; " his going about with his disciples ; his healing the sick and lame, and raising the dead ; his foretelling his own sufferings and resurrection ; his being betrayed and forsaken by his own disciples ; his suffering both of his own accord and in obedience to his heavenly Father ; his grief and trouble, and his praying, " Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ; " the ignominious treatment he met with, the robe that was put upon him, the crown of thorns, the reed put into his hand, his drinking vinegar and gall, and his being scourged and crucified ; his being seen after his resurrection by a fanatical woman, (as he calls her, meaning Mary Magdalen,) and by his own companions and disciples ; and his showing them his hands that were pierced, the marks of his punishment. He also mentions the angels being seen at his sepulchre.

It is true, he mentions all these things only with a design to ridicule and expose them. But they furnish us with an uncontested proof, that the Gospel was then extant. Accordingly, he expressly tells the Christians, " These things we have produced out of your own writings."

PORPHYRY flourished about the year 270, a man of great abilities ; and his work against the Christians, in fifteen books, was long esteemed by the Gentiles, and thought worthy of being answered by Eusebius, and others in great repute for learning. He was well acquainted with the books of the Old and New Testaments ; and in his writings are plain references to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, John, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistle to the Galatians, and probable references to the other epistles of St. Paul.

About the year 303, HIEROCLES, a man of learning and a magistrate, wrote against the Christians

in two books. He was well acquainted with our Scriptures, and made many objections to them, thereby bearing testimony to their antiquity, and to the great respect which was shown them by the Christians ; for he has referred both to the Gospels and to the Epistles. He mentions Peter and Paul by name, and did not deny the truth of our Saviour's miracles ; but, in order to overthrow the argument which the Christians built upon them, he set up the reputed miracles of Apollonius Ty-anæus to rival them.

The Emperor JULIAN, who succeeded Constantius in the year 361, wrote also against the Christians, and in his work has undesignedly borne a valuable testimony to the history and books of the New Testament. He allows that Jesus was born in the reign of *Augustus*, at the time of a taxing made in Judea by *Cyrenius* ; and that the Christian religion had its rise, and began to be propagated, in the times of the Roman Emperors *Tiberius* and *Claudius*. He bears witness to the genuineness and authenticity of *the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John*, and *the Acts of the Apostles*. And he so quotes them as to intimate, that these were the only historical books received by Christians, as of authority ; and the only authentic memoirs of Jesus Christ, and his Apostles, and the doctrines preached by them. He allows the early date of the Gospels, and even argues for them. He quotes, or plainly refers to, the *Acts of the Apostles*, as already said ; and to *St. Paul's Epistles to the Romans, to the Corinthians, and to the Galatians*. He does not deny the miracles of Jesus Christ, but allows him to have healed the blind, and the lame, and the demoniacs, and to have rebuked the winds, and to have walked upon the waves of the sea. He endeavours, in-

deed, to diminish those works, but in vain. He endeavours also to lessen the number of the early believers in Jesus, but acknowledges, that there were *multitudes of such men in Greece and Italy*, before St. John wrote his Gospel. And he often speaks with great indignation of *Peter and Paul*, those two great Apostles of Jesus, and successful preachers of his Gospel; so that, upon the whole, he has undesignedly borne witness to the truth of many things recorded in the books of the New Testament. He aimed to overthrow the Christian religion, but has confirmed it.

These testimonies "prove that neither Celsus in the second, Porphyry in the third, nor Julian in the fourth century, suspected the authenticity of these books, or even insinuated that Christians were mistaken in the authors to whom they ascribed them. Not one of them expressed an opinion upon this subject different from that which is holden by Christians. And when we consider how much it would have availed them to cast a doubt upon this point, if they could, and how ready they showed themselves to take every advantage in their power, and that they were men of learning and inquiry, their concession, or rather their suffrage upon the subject, is extremely valuable."

That the facts and statements recorded in the Evangelic history were not forgeries of a subsequent period, is made also still more indubitable from the fact, that the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles are quoted or alluded to by a series of Christians, beginning with those who were contemporary with the Apostles, or who immediately followed, and proceeding in close and regular succession from their time to the present. "The medium of proof stated in this proposition," ob-

serves Dr. Paley, “is of all others the most unquestionable, and is not diminished by the lapse of ages. Bishop Burnet, in the History of his own Times, inserts various extracts from Lord Clarendon’s History. One such insertion is a proof that Lord Clarendon’s History was extant when Bishop Burnet wrote, that it had been read and received by him as a work of Lord Clarendon’s, and regarded by him as an authentic account of the transactions which it relates; and it will be a proof of these points a thousand years hence. The application of this argument to the Gospel history is obvious. If the different books which are received by Christians as containing this history, are quoted by a series of writers, as *genuine* in respect of their authors, and as *authentic* in respect of their narrative, up to the age in which the writers of them lived, then it is clear that these books must have had an existence previous to the earliest of those writings in which they are quoted, and that they were then admitted as authentic.”

Y. These testimonies are very satisfactory; but how shall I know that the books now included in the Bible are *all* sacred, and that those mentioned in the above testimonies have not been *altered* and *corrupted*?

T. With respect to the Scriptures of the Old Testament; the list of Josephus, the Septuagint translation, and the Samaritan Pentateuch, are sufficient proofs that the books which are received by us as sacred, are the same as those received by the Jews and Samaritans long before the Christian era. For the New Testament; beside the quotations from almost all the books now included in that volume, and references to them by name, in the earliest Christian writers, *catalogues* of authen-

tic scriptures were published at very early periods, which, says Dr. Paley, "though numerous, and made in countries at a wide distance from one another, differ very little, differ in nothing material, and all contain the four Gospels."

Y. But what say you as to their *uncorrupted preservation?*

T. As to the books of the Old Testament, the regard which was paid to them by the Jews, especially to the Law, would render any forgery or material change in their contents impossible. Further, at certain stated seasons, the law was publicly read before all the people of Israel ; and it was appointed to be kept in the ark, for a constant memorial against those who transgressed it. Further, after the people were divided into two kingdoms, both the people of Israel and those of Judah still retained the same book of the law : and the rivalry or enmity that subsisted between the two kingdoms, prevented either of them from altering or adding to the law. After the Israelites were carried captive into Assyria, other nations were placed in the cities of Samaria in their stead ; and the Samaritans received the Pentateuch, as well as the Jews, but with this difference, that the Samaritan Pentateuch was in the Old Hebrew or Phenician characters, in which it remains to this day ; whereas the Jewish copy was changed into Chaldee characters, (in which it also remains to this day,) which were fairer and clearer than the Hebrew, the Jews having learned the Chaldee language during their seventy years' abode at Babylon. The jealousy and hatred which subsisted between the Jews and Samaritans, made it impracticable for either nation to corrupt or alter the text in any thing of consequence without certain discovery ; and the general agreement between

the Hebrew and Samaritan copies of the Pentateuch, which are now extant, is such, as plainly demonstrates that the copies from which each was taken were originally the same. Nor can any better evidence be desired, that the Jewish Bibles have not been corrupted or interpolated, than this very book of the Samaritan ; which, after more than two thousand years' discord between the two nations, varies as little from the other as any classic work in a less tract of time has disagreed from itself by the unavoidable slips and mistakes of so many transcribers.

After the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, the Book of the Law and the Prophets was publicly read in their synagogues every Sabbath-day ; which was an excellent method of securing its purity, as well as of enforcing the observation of the law.

After the birth of Christ, the Old Testament was held in high esteem both by Jews and Christians. The Jews also frequently suffered martyrdom for their Scriptures, which they would not have done, had they suspected them to have been corrupted or altered. Besides, the Jews and Christians were a mutual guard upon each other, which must have rendered any material corruption impossible, if it had been attempted : for if such an attempt had been made by the Jews, they would have been detected by the Christians.

Lastly, the *agreement of all the manuscripts* of the Old Testament, (amounting to nearly eleven hundred and fifty,) which are known to be extant, is a clear proof of its uncorrupted preservation. These manuscripts, indeed, are not all entire : some contain one part, and some another. But it is absolutely impossible that *every* manuscript, whether in the original Hebrew, or in any ancient

version or paraphrase, should or could be *designedly* altered or falsified in the *same* passages, without detection either by Jews or Christians. Although the various readings, which have been discovered by learned men, who have applied themselves to the collation of every known manuscript of the Hebrew Scriptures, amount to many thousands, yet these differences are of so little *real* moment, that their laborious collations afford us scarcely any opportunities of correcting the sacred text in important passages.

Equally satisfactory is the evidence for the integrity of the New Testament, and its uncorruptness in any thing material. So early as the two first centuries of the Christian era, we find the very same *facts*, and the very same *doctrines*, universally received by Christians, which we of the present day believe on the credit of the New Testament.

An universal corruption of those writings was impossible, nor can the least vestige of such a corruption be found in history. They could not be corrupted during the life of their authors ; and before their death, copies were dispersed among the different communities of Christians, who were scattered throughout the then known world.

Further, as these books could not be corrupted during the life of their respective authors, and while a great number of witnesses were alive to attest the facts which they record ; so neither could any material alteration take place after their decease, without being detected while the original manuscripts were preserved in the churches.—The Christians, who were instructed by the Apostles or by their immediate successors, travelled into all parts of the world, carrying with them copies of their writings ; from which other copies

were multiplied and preserved. Now, as we have already seen, we have an unbroken series of testimonies for the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament, which can be traced backwards, from the fourth century of the Christian era to the very time of the Apostles ; and these very testimonies are equally applicable to prove its uncorrupted preservation. These sacred records, being universally regarded as the supreme standard of truth, were received by every class of Christians with peculiar respect, as being divine compositions, and possessing an authority belonging to no other books. Whatever controversies, therefore, arose among different sects, (and the Church was very early rent with fierce contentions on doctrinal points,) the Scriptures of the New Testament were received and appealed to by every one of them, as being conclusive in all matters of controversy ; consequently it was morally impossible, that any man, or body of men, should corrupt or falsify them in any fundamental article, should foist into them a single expression to favour their peculiar tenets, or erase a single sentence, without being detected by thousands.

If any material alteration had been attempted by the orthodox, it would have been detected by the heretics ; and, on the other hand, if a heretic had inserted, altered, or falsified any thing, he would have been exposed by the orthodox, or by other heretics. It is well known that a division commenced in the fourth century, between the eastern and western Churches, which, about the middle of the ninth century, became irreconcilable, and subsists to the present day. Now it would have been impossible to alter all the copies in the eastern empire ; and if it had been possible in the east, the copies in the west would have detected the

alteration. But, in fact, both the eastern and western copies agree, which could not be expected if either of them was altered or falsified. The uncorrupted preservation of the New Testament is further evident, *from the agreement of all the manuscripts.* The manuscripts of the New Testament, which are extant, are far more numerous than those of any *single* classic author whomsoever: upwards of three hundred and fifty were collated by Griesbach, for his celebrated critical edition. These manuscripts, it is true, are not all entire: most of them contain only the Gospels; others, the Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles; and some contain the Apocalypse or Revelation of John.—But they were all written in very different and distant parts of the world; several of them are upwards of twelve hundred years old, and give us the books of the New Testament, in all essential points, perfectly accordant with each other. The various readings in no degree whatever affect the general credit and integrity of the text.

Y. I am satisfied as to the uncorrupted preservation of the Bible; but in estimating the credibility of a history, is it not also proper to inquire into the character of the writers?

T. It is; and the inquiry will serve to establish you greatly in the truth of their narrations. They were manifestly *good* men; this was acknowledged by their enemies; and *they* could not therefore knowingly *deceive others.* Nor could they be *deceived themselves.* They could not mistake the facts in the case of the feeding of the five thousand, and the sudden healing of lepers, and lame and blind persons; they could not but know, whether he with whom they conversed for forty days was the same Jesus, as he with whom they had had

daily and familiar intercourse long before his crucifixion. They could not be mistaken as to his ascension into heaven ; nor as to the fact whether they themselves were suddenly endowed with the power of speaking in languages which they had never studied ; nor as to their being able to work miracles, and to impart the same power to others.

Their worldly interests too lay in concealing the truth. By only not bearing testimony, they might have avoided all their sufferings, and have lived quietly. Would men in such circumstances pretend to have seen what they never saw ; assert facts of which they had no knowledge ; go about lying, to teach virtue ; and though not only convinced of Christ's being an impostor, but having seen the failure of his imposture in his crucifixion, yet persist in carrying it on, and so persist as to bring upon themselves, for nothing, and with a full knowledge of the consequences, enmity and hatred, danger and death ?

Y. This was impossible ; but is it not also a great confirmation of the truth of the Evangelical history, that it is so *circumstantial* ?

T. Certainly it is ; for we never find that forged or false accounts of things abound in *particularities* ; and where many particulars are related of time, place, persons, &c., there is always a strong presumption of truth, and on the contrary. Here the evidence is more than presumptive. The history of the Evangelists and of the Acts of the Apostles is so full of references to persons then living, and often to persons of consequence, and to places in which miracles and other transactions took place publicly and not in secret,—and the application of all these facts by the first propagators of the Christian religion to give credit to its

divine authority was so frequent and explicit, and often so reproofing to their opposers,—that if they had not been true, they must have been contradicted, and, if contradicted on good evidence, the authors must have been overwhelmed with confusion. This argument is rendered stronger when it is considered, that “these things were not done in a corner,” nor was the age dark and illiterate, and prone to admit fables. The Augustan age was the most learned the world ever saw. The love of arts, sciences, and literature, was the universal passion in almost every part of the Roman empire where Christianity was first taught in its doctrines, and proclaimed in its facts: and in this inquisitive and discerning era, it rose, flourished, and established itself, with much resistance to its doctrines, *but without being once questioned as to the truth of its historical facts.*

Y. Are we not then at the end of the argument? for as the *genuineness* and *authenticity* of the books of Scripture have been satisfactorily established, then their relations of *miracles*, and their record of *prophecies*, must of course be true; and if the miracles were actually wrought, and the prophecies were really fulfilled, which no one can reasonably doubt, then it must certainly follow, that the Bible contains a *clearly authenticated revelation of the will of God.*

T. Doubtless a ground has already been laid sufficiently firm for your entire faith in the divine authority of the Scriptures; but other evidence, *confirmatory* of your belief, yet remains to be stated;—so abundant is the proof.

CHAPTER V.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF THE TRUTH OF
SCRIPTURE.

T. **W**HAT is the *internal evidence* of the truth of Scripture?

Y. The excellent nature and tendency of its doctrines ; a subject on which I desire to be furnished with some illustrations.

T. Consider, first, the explicitness, sublimity, and evident truth of the representations which the Scriptures make of the nature and attributes of God, respecting which the wisest Heathens fell into errors so gross and fatal. He is there exhibited as the great and the sole First Cause of all things, eternal, self-existent, present in all places, knowing all things ; infinite in power and wisdom ; and perfect in goodness, justice, holiness, and truth. These discoveries of revelation have satisfied the human mind on this great and primary doctrine ; and have given it a resting-place, which it never before found.

Y. Views so just and clear as to the divine nature, I acknowledge, were never acquired by Heathens.

T. Consider also the representations which the Scriptures make of the moral condition of *man*.

Y. But how does this prove the *excellence* of the Scriptures ?

T. By proving their *truth* ; for all the representations which they make of our moral condition are substantiated by universal observation and experience ; and to know our fallen and corrupt state, is the first step to the remedy.

Y. How does it appear that the account the Scriptures give us of man's moral state, which is

indeed sufficiently humbling, is confirmed by observation and experience?

T. The Old and New Testaments agree in representing the human race as *actually* vicious and capable, when without moral check and control, of the greatest enormities: so that not only individual happiness, but social also, is constantly obstructed or endangered. To this the history of all ages bears witness, and present experience gives its testimony.

But they not only assume men to be actually vicious, but vicious in consequence of a *moral taint* in their nature,—originally and permanently so, but for those provisions of grace and means of sanctity of which they speak. What is thus represented as *doctrine* appeals to our reason through the evidence of unquestionable *fact*. The *strong tendency* of man to crime, cannot be denied. Civil penal laws are enacted for no other purpose than to repress it; they are multiplied in the most civilized states to shut out the evil in all those new directions towards which the multiplied relations of man, and his increased *power*, arising from increased *intelligence*, have given it its impulse. Every legal deed, with its seals and witnesses, bears testimony to that *opinion* as to human nature which the experience of man has impressed on man; and history itself is a record chiefly of human guilt, because examples of crime have every where and at all times been much more frequent than examples of virtue. This tendency to evil the Scriptures tell us arises from “the heart,”—the nature and disposition of man; and it is not otherwise to be accounted for. Some indeed have represented the corruption of the race as the result of association and example; but if men were naturally inclined to good, and averse to

evil, how is it that not a few individuals only, but the whole race, have become evil by mutual association? This would be to make the weaker cause the more efficient, which is manifestly absurd.

Y. Is it not a peculiar excellency in the Christian religion, that it points out clearly the means of the *pardon of sin*, and of our *recovery* from our fallen and corrupt state?

T. It is ; and this leads me to notice the next leading doctrine of the Scriptures, which is the restoration of man to the divine favour, through the merits of THE VICARIOUS AND SACRIFICIAL DEATH OF CHRIST, the incarnate Son of God ; and that you may rightly understand this most important doctrine, you must attend to the following particulars :—

The Christian doctrine of atonement is grounded upon the liability of man to punishment in another life, for sins committed against the law of God in this. Men are capable of committing sin, and sin is productive of misery and disorder. These positions cannot be denied. That to violate the laws of God and to despise his authority are not light crimes, is clear from considering them in their general effect upon society, and upon the world. Nor is there any foundation to suppose, that the punishment assigned to sin by the judicial appointment of the Supreme Governor, is confined to the present life. The obvious reason of the case is in favour of the doctrine of future punishment ; for not only is there an unequal administration of punishments in the present life, so that many eminent offenders pass through the present state without any visible manifestation of the divine displeasure against their conduct, but there are strong and convincing proofs that we

are placed in a state of trial, which continues *throughout life*, and the *result* of which can only be known, and consequently we ourselves can only become subjects of reward or punishment, after our existence in this world has terminated.

It is also the doctrine of Scripture that this future punishment of the incorrigible shall be *final and unlimited*. That atonement for the sins of men, which was made by the death of Christ, is represented in the Christian system as the means by which mankind may be delivered from this awful catastrophe. This end it professes to accomplish by means which, with respect to the Supreme Governor himself, preserve his character from being mistaken, and maintain the authority of his government; and with respect to man, give him the strongest possible reason for hope, and render more favourable the circumstances of his earthly probation.

Y. This is so deeply important, that I am anxious to hear the matter fully explained.

T. Attend then:—

How sin may be forgiven without leading to such conceptions of the divine character as would encourage disobedience, and thereby weaken the influence of the divine government, must be considered as a problem of very difficult solution. A government which admitted no forgiveness, would sink the guilty to despair; a government which never punishes offence, is a contradiction,—it cannot exist. Not to punish, is to dissolve authority; to punish without mercy, is to destroy; and where all are guilty, the destruction would be universal. That we cannot sin with impunity, is a matter determined. The Ruler of the world is not careless of the conduct of his creatures; for that penal consequences are attached to offence

is not a subject of argument, but is made evident from daily observation of the events and circumstances of the present life. It is a principle therefore already established, that the authority of God must be preserved ; and it ought to be remarked that in that kind of administration which restrains evil by penalty, and encourages obedience by favour and hope, we and all moral creatures are the interested parties, and not the Divine Governor himself, whom because of his independent and perfect nature, our transgressions cannot injure. The reasons therefore which compel him to maintain his authority do not terminate in himself. If he becomes a party against offenders, it is for our sake, and for the sake of the moral order of the universe, to which sin, if encouraged by a negligent administration, and by entire or frequent impunity, would be the source of endless disorder and misery : and if the granting of pardon to offence be strongly and even severely guarded, we are to refer it to the moral necessity of the case, as arising out of the general welfare of accountable creatures, liable to the deep evil of sin, and not to any reluctance on the part of our Maker to forgive, much less to any thing vindictive in his nature,—charges which have been most inconsistently and unfairly brought against the Christian doctrine of Christ's vicarious sufferings. If it then be true that the relief of offending man from future punishment, and his restoration to the divine favour, ought, for the interests of mankind themselves, and for the instruction and caution of other beings, to be so bestowed, that no licence shall be given to offence ; that God himself, whilst he manifests his compassion, should not appear less just, less holy, than the maintenance of an efficient and even awful authority requires ;

that his *commands* shall be felt to be as compelling, and that disobedience shall as *truly*, though not so *unconditionally*, subject us to the deserved penalty, as though no hope of forgiveness had been exhibited ;—I ask on what scheme, save that which is developed in the New Testament, these necessary conditions are provided for? Necessary they are, unless we contend for a *licence* and an *impunity* which shall annul the efficient government of the universe, a point which no reasonable man will contend for; and if not, then he must allow that this is strong internal evidence of the truth of the doctrine of Scripture, which makes the offer of pardon consequent only upon the securities we have before mentioned. If it be said that sin may be pardoned in the exercise of the divine prerogative, the reply is, that if this prerogative were exercised towards a part of mankind only, the passing by of the others would be with difficulty reconciled to the divine character; and if the benefit were extended to all, government would be at an end. Were this principle to regulate human governments every criminal would escape, and judicial forms would become a subject for ridicule. Nor is it the principle which the Divine Being in his conduct to men in the present state acts upon, though in this world punishments are not final and absolute. Repentance does not restore health injured by intemperance, property wasted by profusion, or character once stained by dishonourable practices. If repentance alone could secure pardon, then all must be pardoned, and government dissolved, as in the case of forgiveness by the exercise of mere prerogative; if a selection be made, then different and discordant principles of government are introduced into the divine administration, which cannot be maintained.

To avoid the force of these obvious difficulties, some have added reformation to repentance, and would restrain forgiveness to those only, who to their penitence add a course of future obedience to the divine law. But a change of conduct does not, any more than repentance, repair the mischiefs of former misconduct. Even in this world we see that the sobriety of the reformed man does not always restore health ; and the industry and economy of the formerly negligent and wasteful, repair not the losses of extravagance. Nor is it necessary to dwell upon the contradiction which this theory involves to all the principles of government established among men, which in flagrant cases never suspend punishment in anticipation of a change of conduct ; but in the infliction of penalty look steadily to the crime actually committed, and to the necessity of vindicating the violated majesty of the laws.

Y. These are great difficulties.

T. Yes : the question, how may mercy be extended to offending creatures, the subjects of the divine government, without encouraging vice by lowering the righteous and holy character of God, and the authority of his government, in the maintenance of which the whole universe of beings are interested, is at once one of the most important and one of the most difficult which can employ the human mind. None of the theories which have been opposed to Christianity afford a satisfactory solution of the problem. They assume principles either destructive to moral government, or which cannot in the circumstances of man be acted upon. The only answer is found in the holy Scriptures. They alone show, and indeed they alone profess to show, how God may be *just*, and yet the *justifier* of the ungodly. Other

schemes show how he may be merciful ; but the difficulty does not lie there. This meets it, by declaring "the righteousness of God," at the same time that it proclaims his mercy. The voluntary sufferings of an incarnate divine person "for us," in our room and stead, magnify the justice of God ; display his hatred to sin ; proclaim "the exceeding sinfulness" of transgression, by the deep and painful sufferings of the substitute ; warn the persevering offender of the terribleness as well as the certainty of his punishment ; and open the gates of salvation to every believing penitent. It is a part of the same divine plan to promise the influence of the Holy Spirit to awaken penitence, and to lead the wandering soul back to Himself ; to renew the fallen nature of man in righteousness, at the moment he is justified through faith ; and to place him in circumstances in which he may henceforth "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." *All the ends of government are here answered.* No licence is given to offence ; the moral law is unrepealed ; a day of judgment is still appointed ; future and eternal punishments still exhibit their awful sanctions ; a new and singular display of the awful purity of the divine character is afforded ; yet pardon is offered to all who seek it ; and the whole world may be saved !

Y. These are indeed glorious discoveries, and ought to kindle supreme and everlasting love to God in our hearts, and to inspire our lips with ceaseless praises.

T. And had I time, I might give you other instances of the excellent doctrines which the Scriptures contain ; as that respecting *the influences of the Holy Spirit*, which give a strength to men which they have not by nature ; the doctrine of a *Providence*, divine, universal, tender, and watch-

ful ; and especially the views afforded us of man's *immortality* and of a *future life*. These, however, you must consider at your leisure.

Y. But you said something of the *moral tendency* of the Scriptures, as a part of the internal evidence of their truth.

T. This tendency is obvious. No where but in the Scriptures have we a perfect system of morals ; and the deficiencies of pagan morality only exalt the purity, the comprehensiveness, the practicability of ours. The character of the Being acknowledged as Supreme must always impress itself upon moral feeling and practice ; the obligation of which rests upon his will. We have seen the views entertained by pagans on this all-important point, and their effects. The God of the Bible is "holy," without spot ; "just," without intermission or partiality ; "good," boundlessly benevolent and beneficent : and his law is the image of himself, "holy, just, and good." These great moral qualities are not, as with them, so far as they were apprehended, merely abstract, and therefore comparatively feeble in their influence. In the person of Christ, our God incarnate, they are seen exemplified in action, displaying themselves amidst human relations, and the actual circumstances of human life.—With them, the authority of moral rules was either the opinion of the wise, or the tradition of the ancient, confirmed, it is true, in some degree by observation and experience ; but to us, they are given as commands immediately from the Supreme Governor, and ratified as his by the most solemn and explicit attestations. With them, many great moral principles, being indistinctly apprehended, were matters of doubt and debate : to us, the explicit manner in which they are given excludes both ; for it cannot be questioned, whether

we are commanded to love our neighbour as ourselves ; to do to others as we would they should do to us, a precept which comprehends almost all relative morality in one plain principle ; to forgive our enemies ; to love all mankind ; to live "righteously" and "soberly," as well as "godly;" or that magistrates must be a terror only to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well ; that subjects are to render honour to whom honour, and tribute to whom tribute, is due ; that masters are to be just and merciful, and servants faithful and obedient. By Christianity, impurity of thought and desire is restrained in an equal degree as their overt acts in the lips and conduct. Humility, meekness, gentleness, placability, disinterestedness, and charity, are all as clearly and solemnly enjoined as the grosser vices are prohibited ; and on the unruly tongue itself is impressed "the law of kindness." Nor are the injunctions feeble : they are strictly LAW, and not mere *advice* and *recommendations*. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord ;" and thus our entrance into heaven, and our escape from perdition, are made to depend upon this preparation of mind.

Y. But is there not a species of evidence in favour of Christianity, which is called **COLLATERAL**?

T. There is : and it arises from so many sources, that it cannot be fully exhibited in this conversation ; but I will give you one or two examples of it.

Y. You will oblige me.

T. *The marvellous propagation of Christianity* in the three first centuries is evidence of this kind, and intimates to us that its *facts* could not be disputed ; that *miracles* were really wrought, to produce conviction in the minds of men so rapidly

and effectually ; and that a *divine power* accompanied the promulgation of its doctrines.

Y. But did not the doctrine of Mahomet spread rapidly and extensively ?

T. Yes ; but that was propagated by the *sword*, and entitled all who embraced it to *honours* and *privileges*, and, above all, encouraged men in their *vices* ; but in less than three centuries, Christianity overturned Paganism in the Roman empire, and spread itself through the civilized world, *in opposition to human power* ; and when, through a great part of this period, its professors were exposed to continual *reproach*, and often to terrible *persecutions* ; and although it *discouraged*, reproved, and forbade every kind of vice. The first Preachers of the Gospel, though unsupported by human power, and unpatronized by philosophic wisdom, and even in opposition to both, succeeded in effecting a revolution in the opinions and manners of a great portion of the civilized world, to which there is no parallel in the history of mankind. Though aspersed by the slander of the malicious, and exposed to the sword of the powerful, in a short period of time they induced multitudes of various nations, who were equally distinguished by the peculiarity of their manners, and the diversity of their language, to forsake the religion of their ancestors. The converts whom they made deserted ceremonies and institutions which were defended by vigorous authority, sanctified by remote age, and associated with the most alluring gratification of the passions.

After their death the same doctrines were taught, and the same effects followed, though successive and grievous persecutions were waged against all who professed their faith in Christ by successive Emperors, and inferior magistrates ; so that about

A. D. 140, Justin Martyr writes,—“ There is not a nation, Greek or Barbarian, or of any other name, even of those who wander in tribes, and live in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of the universe in the name of the crucified Jesus.”

Y. The success of Christianity, and that of the religion of Mahomet, I now plainly perceive are not parallel, but contrary cases.

T. The *actual effect* produced by this new religion upon society, and which it is still producing, is another point in the collateral evidence. In every pagan country where it has prevailed, it has abolished *idolatry*, with its sanguinary and polluted rites. It also effected this mighty revolution,—that the sanctions of religion should no longer be in favour of the worst passions and practices, but be directed against them. It has raised the standard of *morality*, and by that means, even where its full effects have not been suffered to display themselves, has insensibly improved the manners of every Christian state. What heathen nations are, in point of morals, is now well known; and the information on this subject, which for several years past has been increasing, has put it out of the power of infidels to urge the superior manners of either China or Hindostan. It has abolished *infanticide* and *human sacrifices*, so prevalent among ancient and modern Heathens; put an end to *polygamy* and *divorce*; and, by the institution of marriage in an indissoluble bond, has given birth to a felicity and sanctity in the domestic circle which it never before knew. It has exalted the condition and character of *woman*, and by that means has humanized *man*. It abolished domestic slavery in ancient Europe; and from its prin-

ciples the struggle which was maintained with African slavery drew its energy, and obtained a triumph as complete. It has given a milder character to *war*, and taught modern nations to treat their prisoners with humanity, and to restore them by exchange to their respective countries. It has laid the basis of a *jurisprudence* more just and equal ; given civil rights to subjects ; and placed restraints on absolute power. It has crowned its achievements by its *charity*. Hospitals, schools, and many other institutions for the aid of the aged and the poor, are almost exclusively its own creations, and they abound most where its influence is most powerful. The same effects to this day are resulting from its influence in those heathen countries into which the Gospel has been carried by Missionaries sent out from this and other Christian states.

Y. These effects surely prove, that so benevolent, holy, and beneficial a system of religion is worthy of all acceptation.

CHAPTER VI.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

Y. I THANK you for this account of the evidences of the truth of the Scriptures, which has greatly confirmed and established my faith ; but I have occasionally heard *objections* to the Scriptures, which I will thank you to enable me to answer, should I

again meet with them in reading or in conversation.

T. State those of them you recollect.

Y. Against the evidence from *miracles* I have heard it urged, that the Egyptian magicians, in several instances, wrought the same miracles as Moses.

T. The wonders wrought by the magicians were probably *juggling tricks*. These idolaters were perhaps assisted in their *sleights of hand* by evil spirits; but when they went beyond what could by any sleight of hand or subtle contrivances be imitated, as in the plague of *lice*, they were themselves obliged to confess the interposition of “the finger of God.”

Y. But several pretended heathen miracles, as well as those said to take place in the Church of Rome, are often mentioned by infidels.

T. They are; yet even they hesitate to found any serious argument upon them. A learned Divine has laid down some just rules for trying miracles, and observes,—

That we may reasonably suspect any accounts of miracles to be false, if they are not published *till long after the time* when they are said to have been performed,—or if they were not first published *in the place* where they are said to have been wrought,—or if they probably were suffered to pass *without examination*, in the time and at the place where they took their rise. These are *general* grounds of suspicion; to which may be added particular ones, arising from any circumstances which plainly indicate imposture and artifice on the one hand, or credulity and imagination on the other.

Before such tests all pagan, popish, and other pretended miracles, without exception, shrink;

and they are not for a moment to be brought into comparison with works wrought *publicly*,—in the sight of *thousands*, and those often opposers of the system to be established by them,—works not by any ingenuity whatever to be resolved into artifice on the one part, or into the effects of imagination on the other,—works performed before scholars, statesmen, rulers, persecutors ;—of which the instances are numerous, and the places in which they occurred various,—works published at the time, and on the very spot,—works not in favour of a ruling system, but directed against every other religious establishment under heaven ; and, for giving their testimony to which, the original witnesses had reason to expect, and did in most instances incur, reproach, stripes, imprisonment, and death.

Y. This is very convincing as to miracles ; but as to the *prophecies* of Scripture, I have heard them compared to the heathen *oracles*, which pretended to foretel future things, and whose predictions are in some instances said to have been remarkably accomplished.

T. No contrast can be greater.—

The first great distinction lies in this, that none of the predictions ever uttered by the Delphic, or other oracles, went deep into futurity. They relate to events on the eve of taking place, and whose *preparatory circumstances* were known. The oracles did not even pretend to foresee things at the distance of a few years ; though even a hundred years had been a very limited period in comparison of the range of the prescience of inspired prophets, who looked through the course of succeeding ages, to the end of time.

A second contrast lies in the ambiguity of the oracular responses. The prophecies of Scripture

are sometimes obscure, though this does not apply to the most eminent of those which have been most signally fulfilled, as we have already seen ; but they never *equivocate*. For this the Pythian oracle was notorious. Historians relate, that Crœsus, who had expended large sums upon the agents of this delusion, was tricked by an equivocation, through which, interpreting the response most favourably for himself, he was induced to make an unsuccessful war on Cyrus. In his subsequent captivity he repeatedly reproached the oracle, and charged it with falsehood. The response delivered to Pyrrhus was of the same kind ; and was so expressed as to be true, whether Pyrrhus should conquer the Romans, or the Romans Pyrrhus. Many other instances of the same kind are given ; not to mention the trifling, and even bantering and jocose oracles, which were sometimes pronounced.

The venality, wealth, and servility of the managers of the Delphic oracle, present another contrast to the poverty and disinterestedness of the Jewish Prophets, whom no gifts could bribe, and no power awe in the discharge of their duty. Demosthenes, in one of his speeches to the Athenians, publicly charges this oracle with being “ gained over to the interests of King Philip ;” and the Greek historians give other instances in which it had been corrupted by money. Can then the prophecies of Scripture be paralleled with these dark, and venal, and delusive oracles, without impiety ? And could any higher honour be wished for the Jewish Prophets, than the comparison into which they are thus brought with the corrupt agents of paganism at Delphos and other places ?

Y. Ridicule has been sometimes cast upon the Prophets by profane writers, for those significant

actions by which they illustrated their predictions ; as when Jeremiah hides his girdle in a hole of the rock, and Ezekiel weighs the hair of his head in balances. How is this explained ?

T. This ridicule can only proceed from ignorance. In the early ages of the world, the deficiency of language was often supplied by signs ; and when language was improved, the practice remained after the necessity was over ; especially among the easterns, whose natural temperament inclined them to this mode of conversation. The charges then of absurdity and fanaticism brought against the Prophets, vanish of themselves. The *absurdity* of an action consists in its being extravagant and insignificant ; but use, and a fixed application, made the actions in question both sober and pertinent. We may add, that several of these actions were performed in *vision* ; and that considering the genius of the people who were addressed, they were calculated strongly to excite their attention, which was the end for which they were adopted.

Y. It is objected to the Bible, that it represents God as giving command to the Israelites to exterminate the nations of Canaan.

T. This objection cannot be argued upon the mere ground that it is contrary to the divine justice or mercy to cut off a people indiscriminately, from the eldest to the youngest, since this is done in earthquakes, pestilences, &c. The character of the God of Nature is not therefore contradicted by that ascribed to the God of the Bible. The whole objection resolves itself into this question : Was it consistent with the character of God to employ *human agents* in this work of destruction ? Who can prove that it was not ? No one ; and yet here lies the whole stress of the objection.

The Jews were not rendered more cruel by their being so commissioned, for we find them much more merciful in their practice than other ancient nations ;—nor can this instance be pleaded in favour of exterminating wars, since there was in the case a special commission for a special purpose, by which it was limited. Other considerations are also to be included. The sins of the Canaanites were of so gross a nature, that it was necessary to mark them with signal punishments for the admonition of surrounding nations ; the employing of the Israelites as instruments, under a special and publicly proclaimed commission, connected the punishment more visibly with the offence, than if it had been inflicted by the array of warring elements ; whilst the Israelites themselves would be more deeply impressed with the guilt of idolatry, and its ever accompanying polluted and sanguinary rites. Finally, the Canaanites had been long spared, and in the mean time both warned by partial judgments, and reproved by the remaining adherents of the patriarchal religion who resided among them.

Y. The intentional offering of Isaac by Abraham, has often been objected to.

T. The answer is, 1. That Abraham, who was in the habit of sensible communication with God, could have no doubt of having received a divine command ; and the right of God to take away the life he had given, cannot be questioned. 2. That he proceeded to execute the command of God *in faith*, as the Apostle Paul has stated, that God would raise his son from the dead. The whole transaction was extraordinary, and cannot therefore be judged by common rules ; and it could only be fairly objected to, if it had been so stated as to encourage human sacrifices. Here, however,

are sufficient guards. An indubitable divine command was given ; the sacrifice was prevented by the same authority ; and the history stands in a book which represents human sacrifices as an abomination to God.—But I will save you the trouble of enumerating several minor objections, by glancing at them collectively.

The objections which have been raised against characters and transactions in the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, are dissipated by the single consideration, that where they are obviously immoral or unjustifiable, they are never *approved* ; and are merely stated as *facts of history*. The conduct of Ehud, of Samson, and of Jephtha, may be given as instances.

The advice of David, when on his death-bed, respecting Joab and Shimei, has been attributed to his private resentment. This is not the fact. He spoke in his character of king and magistrate, and gave his advice on public grounds, as committing the kingdom to his son.

The conduct of David also towards the Ammonites, in putting them “under saws and harrows of iron,” has been the subject of severe animadversion. But the expression means no more than that he employed them in laborious works, as *sawing*, making iron *harrows*, hewing wood, and making *bricks*, the Hebrew prefix signifying *to* as well as *under*. “He put them to saws and harrows of iron, (some render it *iron mines*,) and to axes of iron, and made them to pass through the brick-kiln.”

With respect to the *imprecations* found in many parts of Scripture, and which have been represented as expressions of revenge and malice, it has been often and satisfactorily observed that they are *predictions*, and not *anathemas* ; the im-

perative mood being put for the future tense, according to the Hebrew idiom.

With respect to all other objections, it has been well observed, "that a little skill in the original languages of the Scriptures, their idioms and properties, and in the times, occasions, and scope of the several books, as well as in the antiquities and customs of those countries which were the scenes of the transactions recorded, will always clear the main difficulties."

Y. These general observations will be of use to me in future. But what say you to the common objection, that the Scriptures require us to believe things incomprehensible to human reason?

T. I answer, that many doctrines and duties are comprehensible enough; no mystery at all is involved in them; and as to incomprehensible subjects, nothing is more obvious than that a *fact* may be the subject of revelation, as that God is eternal and omnipresent, whilst the *mode* may still remain mysterious and incomprehensible. The fact itself is not hidden, or expressed in language or in symbol so equivocal as to throw the meaning into difficulty,—the only sense in which the objection could be valid. As a fact, it is clearly revealed that these are attributes of the divine nature; but both, notwithstanding that clear and indubitable revelation, are still incomprehensible. It is not revealed how God is eternal and omnipresent,—nor is such a revelation pretended,—but it is revealed THAT HE IS SO; not how a Trinity of persons exists in Unity of essence, but THAT SUCH IS the mode of the divine existence. If, however, men hesitate to admit incomprehensible subjects as to matters of faith, they cannot be permitted to fly for relief from revelation to philosophy; and much less to assert

its superiority, as to clearness of manifestation, to the holy Scriptures. There too it will be seen that mystery and revelation go inseparably together ; that he who will not admit the mystery, cannot have the benefit of the revelation ; and that he who takes the revelation of *facts*, embraces at the same time the mystery of their *causes*. The facts, for instance, of the attraction of gravitation, of cohesion, of electricity, of magnetism, of congelation, of thawing, of evaporation, are all admitted. The experimental and inductive philosophy of modern times has made many revelations of the *relations*, and, in some instances, of the *proximate causes* of these phenomena ; but the *real causes* are all confessedly hidden.

With respect to mechanics, says a writer who has devoted his life to philosophical studies,* “this science is conversant about *force, matter, time, motion, space*; each of these has occasioned the most elaborate disquisitions, and the most violent disputes. Let it be asked, What is *force*? If the answerer be candid, his reply will be, ‘I cannot tell, so as to satisfy every inquirer, or so as to enter into the essence of the thing.’ Again, What is *matter*? ‘I cannot tell.’ What is *motion*? ‘I cannot tell;’ and so of the rest. The fact of the communication of motion from one body to another, is as inexplicable as the communication of divine influences. How, then, can the former be admitted with any face, while the latter is denied solely on the ground of its incomprehensibility?”

Y. It has been objected to the Mosaic chronology, that it fixes the era of creation only about 4000 years earlier than the Christian era ; and

* Dr. Gregory's Letters on the Christian Religion.

against this, evidence has been brought from the chronology of certain ancient nations.

T. The objections drawn from this source have of late rapidly weakened, and are in fact given up by many whose deference to the authority of Scripture is very slight, though but a few years ago nothing was more confidently urged by sceptical writers than the refutation of Moses by the Chinese, Hindoo, and Egyptian chronologies, founded, as it was then stated, on very ancient astronomical observations preserved to the present day. It is, however, now clearly proved, that the astronomical tables, from which it has been attempted to assign a prodigious antiquity to the Hindoos, have been calculated backwards;* and among the Chinese the earliest astronomical observation that appears to rest upon good grounds, is now found to be one made not more than two thousand nine hundred years ago.† As for the conclusion drawn from the supposed Zodiacs in the Temples of Esneh and Dendara in Egypt, it is now strongly doubted whether the figures represented upon them are astronomical or mythological, that is, whether they are Zodiacs at all. Their astronomical character is strongly denied by Dr. Richardson, a late traveller, who examined them with great care; and who gives large reasons for his opinion.—Even if the astronomical character of these assumed Zodiacs be allowed, they are found to prove nothing. M. Biot, an eminent French mathematician, has recently fixed the date of the oldest of them at only 716 years before Christ.

Y. Geologists have sometimes contended that the period of time requisite for the formation of

* Cuvier's Theory of the Earth.

† Ibid.

the primitive structure of the earth, argues that the world is much older than the Mosaic account seems to intimate.

T. But Geologists of equal eminence have been of a contrary opinion ; and the great differences among those who profess this science, render objections of this kind of little weight. Besides, two things are assumed in the objection without any proof: 1. That the primitive strata were not *created* in their present composite form : 2. That if progressively formed, the processes were always as slow as at present:—neither of which can be proved.

Y. Has not the general *deluge* been objected to ?

T. It has ; but the whole earth bears testimony to the fact. It is not only preserved in the traditions of all nations ; but after all the philosophical arguments which were formerly urged against it, philosophy has at length acknowledged that the present surface of the earth must have been submerged under water. “Not only,” says Kirwan, “in every region of Europe, but also of both the old and new continents, immense quantities of marine shells, either dispersed or collected, have been discovered.” This and several other facts seem to prove, that at least a great part of the present earth was, before the last general convulsion to which it has been subjected, the bed of an ocean which at that time was withdrawn from it. Other facts seem also to prove with sufficient evidence, that this recession of the waters, which once covered the parts now inhabited by men, was not gradual but *violent*, such as may be supposed from the brief but emphatic relation of Moses. The violent action of water has left its traces in various undisputed phenomena. “Stratified mountains of various heights exist in dif-

ferent parts of Europe, and of both continents, in and between whose strata various substances of marine, and some vegetables of *terrestrial* origin repose either in their natural state or petrified.”* “To overspread the plains of the Arctic circle with the shells of Indian seas, and with the bodies of elephants and rhinoceri, surrounded by masses of submarine vegetation ; to accumulate on a single spot, as at La Bolca, in promiscuous confusion, the marine productions of the four quarters of the globe ; what conceivable instrument would be efficacious but the rush of mighty waters ?”† These facts, about which there is no dispute, and which are acknowledged by the advocates of each of the prevailing geological theories, give a sufficient attestation to the Deluge of Noah, in which “the fountains of the great deep were broken up,” and from which precisely such phenomena might be expected to follow.

Y. Has it not been supposed that the *ark* could not contain the living creatures which are said to have been received into it?

T. Yes; but without reason. Dr. Hales proves the ark to have been of the burden of 42,413 tons, and asks, “Can we doubt of its being sufficient to contain eight persons and about two hundred or two hundred and fifty pair of four-footed animals,—a number to which, according to M Buffon, all the various distinct species may be reduced,—together with all the subsistence necessary for a twelvemonth, with the fowls of the air, and such reptiles and insects as cannot live under water ?” All these various animals were also controlled by the power of God, whose special agency

* Kirwan’s Geological Essays.

† Gisborne’s “Testimony of Natural Theology.”

is supposed in the whole transaction, and “the lion was made to lie down with the kid.”

Y. Is it not objected, that all the nations of men, so different in *colour* and *feature*, could not, as the Scriptures declare, descend from one common pair?

T. Formerly this was objected ; but now even infidel and sceptical philosophers acknowledge that *colour* and other *differences* indicate only *varieties* in man, but do not prove *distinct species*; and so this objection may be considered as given up.

Y. These are certainly the most weighty objections I have met with, and I see that they admit of satisfactory answers ; and that even if they presented us with *greater* and *real difficulties*, they would weigh nothing against that *great mass of evidence* which establishes the holy Scriptures to be *in truth* the WORD OF GOD.

T. Go then, youth, and “read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest” these sacred writings. Let no sophistry of wicked men lead you from THE TRUTH, and rob you of your BIRTHRIGHT to salvation and immortality. The Bible will be your guide through life, your comfort in affliction, and your hope in death, if you embrace the doctrines it teaches, and believe on the Saviour it sets before you. It is a book which none but

“Bold, bad men despise;”

and which the *wisest* and *best* men of all ages have loved and reverenced as “the word of truth, and the Gospel of salvation.”

THE END.

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